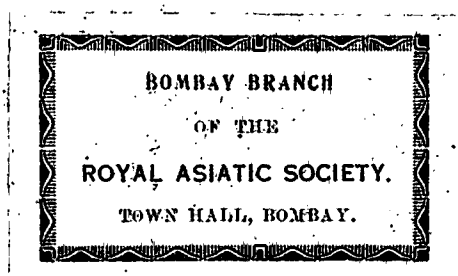
Report of the Committee
of the
Bengal Chamber of
Commerce
1879-80 & 1880-81



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REPORT

OF

THE COMMITTEE

OF THE

133021

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

For the half-year ended 31st October 1880.

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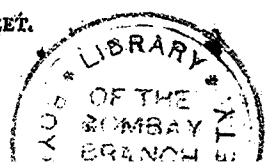

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Proceedings of the Half-yearly General Meeting of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, held on Monday the 17th January 1881.

W. E. CRUM, Esq., *President*, in the Chair.

The Chairman said that this General Meeting of the Chamber was held for the purpose of receiving the Report of Proceedings of the Committee during the half-year ended 31st October last; and in submitting it for their approval he addressed the members present as follows :—

Gentlemen,—In moving the adoption of the Report, it has been the custom of many of my predecessors to refer briefly to a number of the various subjects which have engaged the attention of the Committee during the half-year, and to dwell at greater length on one or two of those which may seem to be the more important. With your permission, and even at the risk of troubling you with somewhat lengthy remarks, I intend to follow that practice to-day, believing that it best serves the purpose of making members acquainted with the work done by their Committee, which after all is, I understand, the main object of these half-yearly meetings. Before taking up these sub-

jects, I would wish to express my thanks to my colleagues on the Committee and to our worthy Secretary for the ready and valuable assistance they have at all times given in helping me to fulfil the duties of an office for which my short experience of Calcutta and of the work of the Chamber hardly fitted me.

After consulting the members of the Chamber, who were unanimously in favour of it, the Committee drew up an address of welcome and congratulation to His Excellency the Marquis of Ripon, which will appear in our next half-yearly report. It was intended to ask His Excellency to do us the honour of allowing a deputation from the Chamber to present it after his arrival; but having regard to his Lordship's state of health, the consequence of the severe illness from which we all rejoice to know that he is now recovering, we thought it best not to seek to trouble him with an audience, and the address has therefore been forwarded through his Private Secretary.

The report contains rather a voluminous correspondence on the question of the days of departure of the Overland Mails, and as all that we have done is fully explained there, whilst there has very recently been a public meeting on the subject, I do not think it necessary to trouble you with more than a very few words in regard

to it. The Committee have of course been careful to ascertain and be guided by the feelings of members in any action they have taken in this important matter, and they deeply regret that their efforts to obtain, consistently with a consideration for other interests, convenient and suitable days of departure for Calcutta have not resulted in success, and that those of this important place have been so completely ignored. The memorial adopted at the public meeting held in this room has been largely signed and will reach the Secretary of State in due course, and I trust have the effect of at least getting for us a reconsideration of the decision which gives us a Monday mail-day.

So far back as 1867, and frequently since then, this Chamber has had under consideration the subject of compulsory registration of partnerships, but up to this time no legislation in regard to it has taken place. Lately the matter was again taken up by your Committee, who have considered it one of very grave importance, and which should not be allowed to rest so long as there is any hope of getting an enactment which will improve the existing state of things. You all know how impossible it often is to ascertain who are the partners in many native firms with whom we have dealings, how it not unfrequently happens, that whilst according to general belief a man is a

partner and is probably virtually so, he has only, when the firm becomes insolvent, to deny what cannot be proved, and thus escape all consequences, and how difficult it is to get delivery of goods in execution of decrees, seeing that if a partner turns up whose existence at the time of the suit was not known, he can claim an interest in the property seized, and so prevent its being given up to the creditor. The Government appears quite to realize the importance of the subject, but has from time to time pointed out difficulties which have hitherto prevented legislation. Whilst fully alive to these, we nevertheless, with the aid of our solicitors, are still hopeful that they may be overcome; and during the coming half-year the matter will again engage our attention.

We have again been pressing on Government the great importance of trying to advance arrangements by which decrees obtained in British Courts against absconding debtors may be executed in those native States where such reciprocity at present does not exist.

Amongst other old friends with which we have had to deal, I may mention the Factory Labour Bill and the Trades Marks Bill. These are legislative measures which, so far as Calcutta is concerned, we still think undesirable.

With the aid of some members of the Chamber who are more particularly interested in the

Kerosine oil trade, we have considered and given to Government our views regarding the provisions of the Petroleum Bill. In dealing with a class of oil which in certain forms, or under certain conditions becomes dangerous, it is, of course, the duty of Government to take measures to guard against danger to life and property, but it is equally its duty to avoid unnecessary and vexatious legislation, and in every way to foster and encourage any trade which is likely to prove of benefit to the country. The dangerous nature of this oil has been greatly over-estimated, and of this we have had abundant evidence, beyond the fact that hitherto there has been an almost perfect immunity from accidents of any serious nature, notwithstanding that during the past year alone as much as five million gallons have been imported into India. We endeavoured to convince the Government that many of the provisions of the Bill as originally proposed are unnecessary, and that if carried into effect the result would be so seriously to hamper and restrict the importation and sale of the article as to check, if not to stamp out altogether, a trade which has already become one of magnitude and importance, and which, as we all know, is conferring immense benefits on the people of this country. I am glad to see that our recommendations, with those of others, seem to have had the desired effect; for I notice that

the Select Committee of the Legislative Council, to which the Bill was referred, have so amended its provisions as to do away with the objectionable features to which attention was drawn.

The Committee addressed the Government of India in regard to the tariff for inland telegraph messages with a view to getting it modified. The present minimum charge of one rupee for any number of words up to six they considered excessive, but they were more particularly anxious that, instead of the system of continuing the charge in the same proportion throughout the message, there should be a rate per word for any in excess of the minimum limitation, thus avoiding the present anomaly of seven words costing twice as much as six. It must be obviously an advantage to the Telegraph Department to have long messages submitted for transmission, because the cost of what we may call the unremunerative work, *i.e.*, the gratuitous sending of the address and official instructions, is necessarily decreased according as the length of each message is increased. So far the Government has not seen its way to consider our proposals favourably. Whilst making full allowance for the difficulties which have to be faced in India compared with other countries in the introduction and maintenance of the telegraph system, the fact remains that the department has not been sufficiently progressive,

and that the whole system has yet to be greatly extended and improved before it can be admitted that nearly all that is possible has been done to make it perfect.

In connection with the telegraph there naturally comes up for consideration the question of the telephone, about which we have all lately heard so much. You are all aware of the extent to which this invention is now being used both in Europe and in America, and how its usefulness and popularity are steadily increasing. At first sight it would appear, from the nature of our business transactions, to be less adapted to our wants than to those of European or American business centres, but I think that, once introduced, we would find it to be a very valuable help in our every-day transactions. The extent to which it would be used must of course depend very much upon the cost, but I understand from the representative of the Edison Telephone Company, that this would not exceed Rs. 20 per month to each subscriber connected with the Central Exchange, a rate which could not be prohibitory. A work of this kind can, I think, be best done when left to private enterprise, and it is to be hoped that the decision of the Government not to grant any concession to a private Company may be withdrawn; seeing that the uses for which the telephone here is

intended, make it almost impossible that its introduction could in any way interfere with the monopoly which the Government has of the telegraph system.

The Government having lately noticed that sea-borne salt had to a considerable extent been displaced in the North West Provinces and Behar by indigenous salt from the Sambhur lake, invited the opinion of the Committee as to the extent of the displacement, and as to the effect likely to be produced by an equalization of the duties in a reduction of that on sea-borne to that charged on the indigenous article. It being a matter of great importance the Committee considered it very carefully, as you may have seen from the reply. We were satisfied that if sea-borne salt were not so heavily handicapped as it is at present, it would penetrate much further into the large consuming districts of Behar and the N. W. Provinces. The rates of duty are at present respectively Rs. 2-14 and Rs. 2-8 per maund, and the Committee, fully alive to the advantages of that policy which has sought to reduce the duty on an article of such universal benefit to the country, would gladly have advocated the reduction of the higher tariff, had they not felt that it would at present be dangerous to run the risk of reducing the revenue, and so perhaps necessitating the imposition of an income tax or of some

other such undesirable form of taxation. They, therefore, gave as their recommendation the levelling up of the one and the levelling down of the other to the same point, which would in their opinion tend to increase the consumption and to prevent loss of revenue, whilst in no way adversely affecting the cost to the people. An examination of the N. W. Customs Administration Report for 1879-80 shews us however that there is something more to be done than the mere equalization of the duties before sea-borne salt can be said to have fair play in competition with the product of the Sambhur lake. It would appear that the supply of common salt at the stores became exhausted towards the end of 1879, and in consequence the demand was supplied with the finer quality at a price 5 to 6 annas per maund under its real value. Merchants, as was natural, shewed their appreciation of this liberality by increasing their purchases to such an extent as to cause an unprecedented off-take in December and January. Surely the business-like plan to have adopted in such circumstances would have been to have supplied the finer salt only at its proper price, and thus the Government would not have been a loser, whilst the consumption of sea-borne salt would have increased. Besides the value of the revenue which it yields, there are many reasons why the trade in English salt

should not be placed at a disadvantage, but rather fostered and encouraged in every possible way. Without a market here for salt our sailing ships would have no cargoes to bring, the tonnage available would be greatly reduced, higher freights would be a natural consequence, and the inevitable result would be a discouragement of our export trade.

On the subject of the Small Cause Court, Bill I need only say a very few words; the letter addressed to the Government by the Committee having already been published and commented on in the daily newspapers. We believe that in expressing approval of the extension of pecuniary jurisdiction to amounts not exceeding Rs. 2,000, we have rightly interpreted the feelings of the mercantile public, to whom it will be a great advantage no longer to be limited to half that amount in disputes which they desire to have quickly settled, without going through the tedious and expensive process which a High Court suit entails. This benefit we have however felt would be very dearly purchased if it should result in depriving the Small Cause Courts of their most essential feature—speedy procedure. As we have pointed out, there are clauses in the Bill which would seem to have the tendency to so increase the work and lengthen the proceedings as to change the whole nature

of the Courts in regard to this most important characteristic, and these, we think, ought to be so altered as to carefully guard against such a danger.

Two years ago your then President, Mr. George Yule, in an able and interesting address, went into the question of port charges and port management, and it may not be out of place for me now to say a few words on the same subject, suggested by the resolution of the Bengal Government on the Port Commissioner's Report of 1879-80, which will be found at the end of our report. The Commissioners are to be congratulated on the work done during the year, on the increasing value of their property, and generally on their continued able management; but it is for us to watch closely how the good results are obtained, and to see whether, consistently with that good management, the charges on trade are kept on a moderate scale, from what sources the profits are derived, and how they are applied. The total debt of the trust amounts only to Rs. 71,05,349; of this Rs. 17,65,000 represents the value of the block made over by Government on its formation and not repayable, and Rs. 53,40,349 loans obtained from Government for new works, bearing interest at 4½ per cent. and repayable in thirty years. The revenue derived from works since 1870 is shown to be Rs. 39,66,382, nearly

all spent in improvements. The gross income for the year under review was Rs. 18,64,293, and the ordinary expenditure, including the interest on debt and sums set aside for insurance fund, was Rs. 13,67,948, leaving a balance of Rs. 4,96,345, which, with a cash balance brought forward from the previous year, leaves the Commissioners with Rs. 5,85,612 to spend on new works and improvements, and with a good balance again to come forward for the current year. An examination of the accounts shows us from what sources this large revenue is derived:

Nett Income 1878-79.

	Rs.
Jetties ...	2,02,077
Strand Bank Lands...	1,52,415
Inland Vessels Wharves	1,59,388
Port Proper ...	1,68,947

It will be seen that notwithstanding the recent reduction in landing charges, the nett income from the Jetties has shown an increase, and the probabilities are that we will find this to be even more marked when the figures for 1880-81 are published, showing (to whatever other causes it may be attributed) that a judicious lowering of charges is sure to enlarge the volume of business, and up to a certain limit, to increase the income. Now, there is no doubt that with an

annual revenue of about 18½ lakhs, and a current expenditure of only 13½ lakhs,—which includes interest on loans and sinking fund applied to the repayment within thirty years of three-fourths of the debt,—the financial position of the Port Trust is most satisfactory. Merchants and shipowners may however be excused if they question the justice or necessity of a system which burdens them now with heavy charges, thus giving future generations an almost free port with all possible improvements and conveniences. It is true, no doubt, that a heavy annual outlay may still be indispensable for many years to come, but surely this need not be met so largely out of revenue as it seems to have been in the past. The Commissioners have now the power to borrow, and their position as owners of so large and valuable a property should enable them to do so without difficulty, and Calcutta should surely no longer be allowed to remain under the stigma of being such a very expensive port.

Since replying to the letter from the Dominion Board of Trade, Canada, inviting us to nominate three representatives of commercial interests of Bengal at the approaching Colonial Conference to be held in London next month, the Committee have requested Mr. J. N. Bullen, Mr. Stephen Ralli, and Mr. D. H. Macfarlane, M. P., to act as the Chamber's delegates.

I think you are all aware of the troubles which have lately arisen in regard to the working of the rules which came into force in March 1879, exempting from duty grey goods made of yarns not finer than 30's; and as the correspondence we have had with Government on the subject is very full and complete, it will be unnecessary for me to go into details with which all of you are probably now conversant. Suffice it to say that, until very recently, everything seemed to be working smoothly, and no one had much cause for complaint excepting on the broad ground that it was inexpedient and unfair to handicap with duty many well-known cloths which, if made in a non-dutiable form in order to compete with the new duty free cloths, would lose the characteristics which had for many years past gained for them a reputation in this market. But suddenly the Custom House authorities seemed to adopt a new policy of strictness, punishing by confiscation and fine all cases alike in which they discovered that cloths were not uniformly made of the duty free yarns.* It mattered not whether the amount of finer yarn discovered was infinitessimal or materi-

* It has been brought to my notice that I was wrong in suggesting that a new policy of strictness had been recently introduced by the Custom House authorities: I am assured that from the beginning, in March 1879, until this question arose, there was no alteration in the policy or method of dealing with the goods; and this being so, I regret that I have seemingly done the Custom House authorities some injustice.—W. E. C.

al, the same punishment was inflicted. What we have endeavoured to explain to Government, and I believe it is now understood and realized, is that all the cases which have come to our notice where fine yarns were introduced have in our opinion been the result entirely of accident or carelessness, that in such cases the gain to the manufacturer would be so very trifling as to warrant our arriving at this conclusion, whilst this view is further strengthened by the fact that no buyer would willingly receive goods of the irregular texture which an admixture of finer yarns must produce. Thus a manufacturer can have nothing to gain and everything to lose by, in any such open and partial way, attempting to evade the requirements of the law. In saying this I do not wish to be understood to imply that attempts may not have been made, and successfully so, to manufacture cloths which, although really dutiable, may pass here as duty free, for we are informed that it is not an uncommon thing to put finer yarn than 30's into the warp where it cannot in practice be detected. But it is not of such cases (none of which have come before the Commiftee) that I am now speaking, and we would all be only too ready to see those who willingly lend themselves to such a fraud severely punished. I am glad to say that in response to our representations Govern-

ment at once issued orders for the restoration of all the goods confiscated and of all fines awarded where the amount of light weft discovered was found not to exceed 2 per cent. of the entire yarn in the parcel. At the same time it has been ruled that the Collector is entitled to levy full duty on all shipments found to contain fine yarns in however small a quantity, and to confiscate and impose a fine in all instances where goods are found to be uniformly made of yarns even one count finer than 30's. We still think that the rules which have resulted and are laid down for the guidance of the Collector of Customs aim at punishments too severe for undoubted cases of accident or carelessness, and that the limit proposed under which the extreme penalties are to be inflicted is too confined. It must not be supposed that if the Government comes down on the importer, he in his turn can always turn to the manufacturer for redress, and if it be impossible for the manufacturer always to be certain that the 30's he is using, may not under certain circumstances wrap 31's, in how much greater a degree must it be impossible for the purchaser of the goods to ascertain with certainty that there may not be this slight variation which now renders him liable to a ruinous loss, against which he probably cannot insure himself. We are at present corresponding on the subject,

but I cannot help thinking that it is unfortunate that in the first instance the discretion given to the Collector by the Act in regard to the infliction of penalties was not judiciously exercised, for thus perhaps would have been avoided all the trouble, irritation and annoyance which have resulted during the last few months. It is surely unnecessary for me to say that the earnest wish of this Chamber is to see the Government revenue jealously guarded, and that for cases of intentional fraud none of the punishments allowed by the Act are too severe, and we would be far from urging any laxness which could have the effect of encouraging the attempt to evade payment of the legitimate taxes of the country. I confess I sympathise with the difficulty the Government, no doubt, have in dealing with this matter at its present stage, for it can be no easy thing to draw a sufficiently broad line between what is to be placed in the category *accidental* and what in that of *fraud*, without on the one hand seeming to encourage gross carelessness, and on the other of inflicting a punishment altogether unmerited. I believe myself that if it has ceased to be a question determinable by the wise discretion of the Collector, it will be impossible to carry out the provisions of the Act in any way which will be found to work fairly and smoothly for the

Government on the one hand or the importer or manufacturer on the other, and thus we come to the broad issue of what should be done in regard to the whole question of the cotton duties, which can no longer be allowed to settle itself by the slow process of natural death which six months ago seemed to be the best practical solution. The answer to this seems to be that Government should choose between re-imposition of the duties, their total abolition, or their further partial abolition by the extension of exemption to all grey goods and yarns. The first alternative I am inclined to dismiss as impracticable, and therefore hardly worthy of serious consideration. No Home Government would attempt such a retrograde movement, for however much some of us may regret and disapprove of the course which was followed in response to the Lancashire agitation so long before it was warranted by the financial position of the country, we could hardly now, as advocates of free trade, consistently ask for the repeal of an enactment which, had the finances of India been ready for it, would gladly have been welcomed as a further step towards the complete realization of that great policy which may some day exist to the benefit of both countries. This Chamber has always been opposed to any premature or partial abolition of the duties, know-

ing full well that however desirable, on broad principles, any such movement might be in itself, it would necessitate the imposition of direct taxation in some form or other which would press more heavily on the people and be productive of greater irritation and discontent, and therefore the true interests of India required a postponement of any immediate legislation such as has taken place. But whatever our opinion may have been in the past, the position, now that the duties have been partially abolished, seems to me to be greatly altered. The trade has adapted itself to the new circumstances, and I cannot believe in the wisdom of any movement which would aim at a complete return to the old system. It may be interesting to notice how rapidly it has so adapted itself, and how effectually the new cloths made of heavier yarns to pass free are displacing the old dutiable goods. In March 1879, the proportion of duty free Shirtings (our largest article of import) to the total quantity imported was only $2\frac{1}{4}$ per cent; six months later it was 50 per cent; and now it is nearly 90 per cent; and the same, in a greater or lesser degree, holds good in regard to all grey cloths, excepting Jacconets and Mulls, which have not yet been made, and are not likely to be made, of the heavier yarns.

If the opinion recently expressed by the

Lieutenant-Governor, that the present system is one which it is practically impossible to work with fairness, be admitted, then it seems to me that the Government will be forced either to abolish the duties wholly, or to extend the exemption further than it now goes. The first of these alternatives would probably receive the greatest support, but even admitting that it would be a more equitable course to adopt than that of the exemption only of grey goods and and grey yarns, I cannot see that the Government is called upon at present to take a step involving such an important further loss of revenue as the freedom from duty of all other cloths would necessitate. Judging from the results of that part of the financial year which has gone, and calculating the same proportion for the unexpired portion, which however is doubtless too sanguine a view to take, the revenue of the financial year derived from the cotton duties promises, as compared with former years, to be somewhat as follows :—

	1878-79.	1879-80.	1880-81.
Grey Goods ...	41,43,244	28,00,091	16,88,000
All Yarns ...	9,02,049	8,46,018	11,26,000
Other Cotton Goods ...	26,67,511	31,73,739	45,13,000
	77,12,804	68,19,848	73,27,000

The current year is an exceptional one, in so far that, from various circumstances, the imports of colored and printed goods have been unusually large and even excessive, and it would therefore be imprudent for Government to expect the permanency of so large a duty revenue; but from these figures we may learn that to abolish the duties altogether would be to sacrifice a revenue of from 60 to 70 lakhs; whilst, judging by the rapidity with which the proportion of grey goods now coming free is increasing, to abandon it only on all these and on grey yarns would not cost the Government more than perhaps some 15 to 16 lakhs. Such a further partial exemption could not of course be defended except on the ground of necessity, and would no doubt provoke an outcry of dissatisfaction, for the printer, the dyer and the bleacher will all think themselves hardly treated in the matter; but as yet the goods they produce meet with little or no competition in Indian manufacture, and the duties levied on them cannot therefore in any sense be called protective, whilst all may rest satisfied that the object of the duties being entirely to raise revenue, they cannot be continued any longer than is required in the interests of the people of India, whose welfare should be the first consideration, and who have certainly suffered less from this form of taxation than

from almost any other which could be devised to replace it. If they are not to be reimposed nor entirely abolished, then there will, I presume, be no necessity for, and no idea at present of, introducing a registration fee scheme, such as the Hon'ble Mr. Hope foreshadowed in the beginning of this financial year, the primary object of which would be to cover the cost of preparing statistics of trade and navigation, but which, we could hardly doubt, would go a good deal further. The present report contains our letter to Government on this subject, written after we had taken your views, which we found were decidedly opposed to the scheme. I could have seen little harm in the proposal had it not, as presented to us, so strongly resembled in everything but name a customs duty, and had it not seemed, from its very general and sweeping nature, and from the necessary inequality of its incidence, to be so liable to the objection that it must ultimately prove a greater source of trouble to the trade than there is even under the present system. It would also have the disadvantage of being a general tax on our export trade, and we all know how that requires rather to be encouraged by the reduction of charges than by their imposition in however small a degree.

Having now touched upon most of the sub-

jects engaging our attention, it may perhaps not be out of place, in conclusion, to say a few words on the present position of trade; and first I would congratulate you on the termination of the war in Afghanistan, on the well-founded hope entertained for the successful government of India under the new régime, and on the bountiful harvests with which India has now been blessed. As to the policy which brought about the war, it would be out of place for me to speak; whether we approved of it or not, we must all rejoice that it has come to an end, and that at last the country is being saved further enormous expenditure.

India's prosperity is, as we all know, greatly dependent on her harvests. If these be deficient there must follow poverty and distress, imports and exports fall off, whilst the Government has to meet increasing demands with a decreasing revenue, public works are curtailed or suspended, and taxation has to be increased; but if they be abundant, there must follow good wages and cheap food, an increase of imports and exports, an expansion of the revenue and consequent extension of useful works tending to develop the resources of the country. Although prosperity cannot of course altogether be estimated by the extent of the imports and exports, yet there is no doubt that from these,

if other circumstances be not forgotten, it may be judged in a very important degree, and I think the increase during the present financial year is so remarkable, as showing of what India is capable under favourable circumstances, that the figures deserve some attention. Turning to the first, we find that during the eight months ended 30th November the total value of imports of cotton goods and yarns, which are after all the real test of the buying power, and, therefore, prosperity of this country, was

1880	...	Rs. 17,00,97,000
1879	...	„ 12,39,38,000
1878	...	„ 11,82,44,000

or, considering that the stocks held are not generally speaking very excessive, an immense increase in consuming power. In examining the figures closely, we find that the increase of imports as between Bombay and Calcutta has not been at all equally divided, for whereas in the case of the former it has been 67 per cent., in that of the latter it has only been 30 per cent., accounted for, in an important degree, by the fact that whilst our trade with the N. W. Provinces has a decided tendency to fall off, that of Bombay is steadily increasing. I fear we must expect that the Western Rajputana Railway now opened will further enable Bombay to take from us a large portion of our trade, and that we will

have in the future to look more than ever to Bengal as our great consuming market.

I am sorry to say that when we turn to exports we do not as yet find the improvement as remarkable or important, and yet an examination of the subject cannot but inspire some hope that a gradual development is in process. The total exports of Indian produce for the 8 months of the financial year were

1880	...	Rs.	44,30,57,623
1879	...	,,	39,59,18,867
1878	...	,,	37,84,48,867

The increase this year has been chiefly in cotton from Bombay, rice from Burmah, and wheat and seeds from Bombay and Calcutta. No one who has the true interests of India at heart can help looking anxiously to see whether there is the prospect that in the future she can more than hold her own in the race of competition with other agricultural producing countries, brought nearer to the large consuming markets by greater internal facilities and lesser ocean distance. It is interesting to notice that notwithstanding ever increasing crops of cotton and wheat in America, there has in these two large articles of export been a very important improvement during the months I have spoken of, the value of cotton exported being 33 per cent. and

of wheat 250 per cent. in excess of the average of the two previous years; and even comparing them with the same period of the year 1877-78, which from the operation of various exceptional causes was a very remarkable one in regard to the extent of exports, the total value of these has even been exceeded during the present financial year. It is an old cry that we want the resources of the country to be developed by the judicious prosecution of public works, but it is one which must never be silenced; and this Chamber must in the future continue to urge on Government, as it has done in the past, the necessity for a steady increase of railway communication, for there is yet much to do before it can be said that the products of the soil are brought as cheaply as they might be to the great sea-board centres. I think when we consider the extent of the improvement in imports and exports, and the high position in which the credit of the Government of India now stands,—which must tend to facilitate the future development of the country,—we are justified in taking a hopeful view of Indian prospects. But a time of prosperity is a time to prepare for adversity, and as the finances improve under careful management, it is surely not too much to expect that the present restrictions on the prosecution of public works may be removed, and that

they may again be vigorously taken in hand to the lasting benefit of India.

Mr. H. B. H. TURNER, in seconding the adoption of the report, said,—I have undertaken to offer to the Chamber some explanation of the action of the Committee, of which I am a member, with respect to the question of the mail, which action was called in question at the recent public meeting upon the subject.

At that meeting, one speaker complained that not only in his own opinion, but also in that of several other gentlemen, our action had been injudicious, that had the Committee shown less explicit interest in endeavouring to get an arrangement which would satisfy them, the probability is that now we should have had an arrangement which would have been satisfactory to the whole of the communities interested; and special exception was taken to an expression, said to have been used in writing to Government, that Tuesday would be a most inconvenient day for the departure of the mails from Calcutta. This expression, it was added, seems to throw upon Government the duty of finding some other day which would be more suitable for the community interested. It appears to me, however, that these charges are based upon a misconception of the correspondence. The Committee endeavoured,

in all their communications with the Government, to show that they were not unmindful of general interests, and though they did write that Tuesday would be a most inconvenient day for the closing of the Calcutta mails, this particular expression was used not in writing to the Government, but to the Bombay Chamber. Bombay had set itself to secure at all hazards a Friday evening sailing of the mail steamer, and had commenced the agitation by complaining loudly of the loss of the Saturday half holiday and of the interference with the volunteer drill. But no sooner did the Director General of the Post Office point out that these objects might be obtained by an early closing of the mails on Saturday, than Bombay merchants discovered that it was not the half holiday they wanted after all, but that on the contrary they could not afford to spare even a few hours of work in view of the keen competition of the most enterprising nation of the world to which they were subjected. It was in replying to arguments such as these, forced home by the Bombay Chamber assuring us that we were unreasonable, that the Committee gave utterance to the voice of the Chamber and did write to the Bombay Chamber (not to Government) that, as compared with the existing mail day, Tuesday would be a most inconvenient day for us. But they took up no impracticable posi-

tion. So far from this was our attitude, that in a letter written shortly afterwards to the Director General of the Post Office, we instructed the Secretary of the Chamber to say :—

" In conclusion, I am directed to say that my Committee feel sure that the Bengal Chamber of Commerce would reconsider their request for the continuance of a Wednesday mail day for Calcutta if it could be shown (as stated by Bombay) that the general public in India and at home would benefit by the mail being closed here on some other day." But while charging the Committee with a want of consideration for the interests of other communities, our critics at the recent public meeting separated without its having occurred to any gentleman that the Saturday mail which the meeting adopted in order to conciliate Bombay, in preference to our choice of Friday, entails a Sunday mail day for our Madras friends. They not only overlooked the interests of Madras in fixing upon Saturday for the monsoon closing in Calcutta in order to meet the fancied wants of Bombay, but they forgot the fact that a Monday closing in Bombay during the monsoon months is no real hardship. We all know that Bombay trade during the monsoon comes almost to an end, and, indeed, one speaker at a recent meeting in Bombay went so far as to say,—" Exporters had to do all their work during

four months, and the rest of the time was practically holiday. Employés had almost as many days or even weeks as they chose." Perhaps this little incident may serve to show how difficult it is in this matter to reconcile all interests.

That we have endeavoured to reconcile all interests, I trust you will allow, and, further, that you will endorse the opinion of our action formed by the Director General of the Post Office who, when writing to us on the 1st March last said,—"I pointed out also (to the Bombay Chamber) that Calcutta interests, if taken by themselves, would point to a Monday departure from Bombay, which day would, I believe, accord with the estimate of British interests formed by the British Postal authorities, and that it was only out of deference to Bombay interests that the Calcutta Chamber was not pressing for a Monday departure. I considered this action of the Calcutta Chamber entitled the representations which it had made against Friday to all the more consideration."

I referred just now to the smallness of the Bombay trade during the monsoon months, and I think it would perhaps be useful to draw your attention to the total business of that port as compared with our own. It seems to me that in listening to the Bombay complainants of want of

time for mail work in the event of a Monday closing of the mails in Bombay, the Secretary of State for India, as well as our friends in Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow and other towns have quite overlooked how far more onerous to Calcutta the present arrangement must prove.

Not only is the value of our export trade far larger (about half as much again) but we deal in a far greater variety of articles, and at the same time in articles of considerably larger bulk in proportion to value.

The figures of the past two years give the value of the Calcutta exports as Rs. 29,31,34,366 and Rs. 30,37,66,484 against 18,99,07,489 and Rs. 22,55,56,880 as that of Bombay.

In respect to bulk—setting aside the tonnage of steamers which is much the same for both ports, say a total for two years of 763,795 tons for Calcutta and 762,947 tons for Bombay—I find that in 1878-79 Calcutta loaded 533,930 tons of sailing tonnage, and in 1879-80, 558,273 tons, while Bombay could find cargo for only 75,412 and 73,398 tons during those years.

A far larger amount of tonnage went to Bombay, drawn there to some extent by the demand for coal for its mills and railways; but there being no cargo for it, no less than 590,000 tons of steam and sailing tonnage left Bombay in those two years to seek cargo elsewhere.

I am informed that there is very little prospect of our case being considered in regard to arrangements for 1881, but that as the arrangements for each year are quite independent of those of any other, I think we should put forward, as forcibly as we can, that our convenience, having regard to so important a trade, should be subordinate only to the convenience of the larger public at home, and that if a Monday mail day is inevitable at some place, the large trade of Calcutta,—a trade in a large variety of articles requiring more time for the preparation of the documents referring to it,—should not be burdened with it. Nor do I think that this correspondence, when posted, should be so detained in Bombay as to cause the delivery in London to be delayed upwards of 16 hours.

One word more, Gentlemen. In order to meet what we understand to be the needs of Bombay, we consented to an earlier hour for the closing of our mails in Calcutta. I do not fancy this has proved a generally convenient arrangement. It was submitted to rather than have an earlier closing day, but I regret to notice from the Post Office Circular that, from the 7th February, we are not only to have the earlier day, but the earlier hour is to be continued. I would propose to bring this to the notice of the Postal author-

ities ; but I would ask if your views coincide with mine upon the subject.

The Hon'ble Mr. Inglis said that he had much pleasure in supporting the adoption of the report, and in reference to what had fallen from Mr. Turner, he would say, as one of those who supported the amendment at the public meeting, he felt he owed an apology to the Committee for moving in a direction somewhat contrary to what they recommended. He did not, however, regret the resolution they arrived at, as he thought that the less they asked at present the more they were likely to get. At the same time, if he had had the report in his hand, and if he had known the care the Committee evidently took to form their opinion on the subject, he was not sure he would have spoken so freely as he had done, and he begged to apologise to the Committee for any seeming neglect he had shown for the care they had taken in the matter.

He thought Mr. Turner had brought out very forcibly the importance of the Calcutta trade, and that their convenience ought not to be sacrificed to the convenience of Bombay or of any other community in India, although they were quite willing that the convenience of the whole Indian public should be studied. He thought himself that they ought to agitate for

a morning departure of the mails from Bombay, and he felt satisfied that if they had had a morning departure last year this agitation would never have arisen—at all events at home. He felt certain that letters would have been delivered 24 hours earlier in London, had there been a departure of the steamer from Bombay on Saturday morning instead of Saturday evening and that their Wednesday mail day would have been continued to them. He felt strongly therefore that they should make a combined effort to get a morning departure of the steamer from Bombay during this year, so that they might see the effect of it before arrangements for the next year were made. If it was true, as the Postal authorities told them that there would be a saving of some 16 hours on the voyage were such a change made, he did not see why the Bombay community should object to the morning departure of the mails. If they chose they might write up to midnight and get up again at 4 A.M. on the morning of the steamer's departure, and go on until 8 o'clock, at which hour the Bombay mails should be closed. This would surely give them all the time they want, and would permit of the hour of the steamer's departure being fixed for 10 A.M. which would give a margin of 2 hours for the embarkation of mails and passengers after the

Calcutta letters reach Bombay, and would effect a saving of 2 hours at this one point as compared with present arrangements. By accelerating the speed somewhat on the voyage and avoiding detention in Egypt it would, as the Indian postal authorities show, be very easy to make up other 17 hours before the mails reached London, and letters posted here on Tuesday evening, in the fair season, would in this way be delivered in London that day 3 weeks in the morning, which is all the Home authorities ask for. He hoped the Committee would represent all this very strongly to the Government; and if the closing the mails here on Tuesday, in the fair season, together with a morning departure of the steamer from Bombay on Friday, results in a delivery of the mails in London before the time stipulated for, they would be in a position to ask hereafter for Wednesday in the fair season, and Tuesday during the monsoon. These days, he thought, they should aim at, and hope to get in another year.

The only other matter he wished to draw attention to was that of import duties. While agreeing entirely with what the President had stated on the subject, he thought there was an alternative which he had not referred to. The President had referred to three, stating that one of them namely, a return to the old

state of things, was unworthy of consideration. But he thought there was a fourth, and that was to levy a reduced rate of duty upon all classes of piece-goods. That he thought was the fairest solution of the difficulty. He quite agreed with those gentlemen who looked forward to free imports, but they all agreed that India could not lose these duties at present. Therefore, he thought, to meet the case fairly, the plan would be to re-impose duties upon a reduced scale upon goods which were now imported free, and reduce rates upon all other classes, so as to have them all upon the same footing. The objection to the President's proposal was that bleachers, dyers and printers would undoubtedly have grave cause for complaint if grey goods were admitted free and their special productions were taxed. The result in his opinion would be that a sense of inequality and unfairness would remain, which would not be removed until the duties were either entirely abolished or re-imposed on a reduced scale upon all classes of imported cotton goods.

Mr. G. Yule said that one could not look at the report of the Committee without being convinced that the Committee of the Chamber deserved the deepest thanks of the mercantile community of Calcutta. The report showed that the Committee had an unusual amount of work

before them during the past half-year, and also an extraordinary number of Government Bills to consider, and he would say that the work had been discharged with credit, wisdom, and ability; and the manner in which the work had been done showed that the Calcutta Chamber could fairly compare with some of the most distinguished Chambers of Commerce in the old country. The subjects introduced in the report under notice were all treated with that pre-emiment ability which they were all proud to recognise in the present President and Committee of the Chamber. The varied topics brought before them in the report, and the manner in which they had been handled, gave them a very clear conception of the earnest and arduous duties the Committee and the President had been prosecuting during the past six months.

In commenting upon the report, he would first refer to the import duty upon cotton goods. Now, he must say that he had seen no solution of this vexed question, except the one which the Chairman had himself suggested, and, as Mr. Yule gathered from his remarks, had partially supported. He did not mean a present abolition of the import duties upon all piece-goods, but what he wanted was a clear definite line by which both the Collector of Customs and the merchants

in Calcutta would be guided. In the President's suggestion, they had got a line about which there could be, he imagined, no misunderstanding whatever. Those who knew about piece-goods were aware that it was utterly impossible for a spinner to spin yarn always of the same number, and that it was customary to allow a margin, on either side of any given number, so that an order given for No. 30*s*. would be suitably executed if the actual numbers did not vary more than from 28*s*. to 32*s*, and he conceived it was throwing a most onerous task upon the Customs of de-defining what cannot in practice be defined.

Much blame had been cast upon the Collector for his action in the matter, but he thought that more blame had been cast on him than he really deserved. The Collector had a duty to discharge to the Government, and if he had been somewhat lax in his discipline, and allowed a certain quantity of yarn of 30*s*. to be introduced into piece-goods to the extent of 1½ per cent., it was perfectly obvious that, if the practice was once adopted, the system would soon be followed by an additional 1½ per cent., and after that was established there would be another 1½, and the Collector would in time find 5 or 6 per cent. excess of finer yarns. He would then probably be brought face to face with the Government for dereliction of duty, and for exceeding the powers

conferred upon him by the Act. If any of them were in the same position as the Collector, what other action than that taken by him would they have adopted? At all events, it was better that the question should have been taken up by the Collector, and that the mercantile community should know their position in the matter. If the finances of the country could have afforded it, he would have said that the best solution of the difficulty would be the complete abolition of taxation; but he assumed that the finances of the country were not in such a satisfactory position as to admit of such a thing being done, and he thought that the next most satisfactory thing would be the suggestion of the Chairman, that all grey goods and yarns should be permitted to enter free.

He next wished to refer to the Factory and Labour Bill. He was not sure whether the President had referred to it, but he was glad to see the position which the Committee had taken up on this question. So far as he could gather, there was no other object for introducing a Labour and Factory Bill into India than the fact that they had such a Bill in England. His own conviction was that the less Government interfered between employer and the employed the better it would be for all classes. At present, he was sorry to say, that there seemed to be too

much interference, too much restriction, too much support. The best support they could have was the absence of interference.

One matter referred to by the Chairman was that of the Port Trust, and he had listened to his observations with much interest. He made some calculations some years ago with reference to the accounts of this most important Trust. He then endeavoured to show that this public body was deriving a revenue far in excess of what any public body should derive. He saw from the published accounts that, after paying interest upon debt and the sinking fund, the Trust had made a profit of 39 lacs. Now to his thinking, these 39 lacs were taken out of the pockets of the public unnecessarily, and the income would be sufficiently large if they were able to pay interest upon the amount borrowed and liquidate their debt in 30 years.

The only other point he wished to refer to was with reference to the question of the departure of the mails. He must say that, looking to the whole correspondence, the labour and attention that had been given to the subject by the Committee were very great. They seemed to have given a great deal of day-work and night-work to it, and he regretted exceedingly if any remarks he made at the recent public meeting should have

been felt to have thrown any reflection whatever upon the Committee.

Mr. G. H. Morrison trusted it would not be deemed presumptuous in him if he joined a distinguished ex-president in complimenting the Chairman upon his address. What appeared specially admirable in it was its thoroughly commercial and non-political character. Presidents of the Chamber, as was well-known, were accustomed to favour us with their own individual views on the topics of the day, and their utterances were received, and deservedly so, with considerable attention. He thought that, to others besides himself, it was a relief to find that the President's period of office so far furnished for comment no questions more burning than, for instance, cotton and petroleum. He regretted he still was unable to follow Mr. Yule in his views upon the action of the Committee in respect of the mails. The Committee had pointed out that the period between Sunday night and Tuesday night was insufficient for preparing our documents, and he could not understand how such a representation could be said to have justified the Government in giving us Monday.

He congratulated the Committee upon their action in opposing the attempt of the Port Commissioners to impose an additional charge on

shipping, under the plea that the Powder Magazine did not cover its expenses. That the amount in question (Rs. 5 per vessel) was trifling in itself, did but entitle the Committee to the greater thanks for the vigilance displayed. Unfortunately, it was not the only such attempt. Those of the Chamber who were consignees of vessels, and particularly of sailing ships, were aware that until 1874 Lloyd's and the other Registers gave but one tonnage for each vessel, namely, the net or registered tonnage. Up to that date, accordingly, the Port Commissioners followed the practice of the Government before them, and charged mooring hire on the net. Unfortunately for us, in 1874, Lloyd's began to state the gross tonnage of ships as well as the net, and, indeed, they also gave the builder's tonnage, and then it seemed to dawn on the Commissioners that there was an opening for raising their fees. Accordingly, without notice, and without any sort of sanction, the Commissioners commenced to charge mooring hire according to the gross.

We all know that in respect of marine charges Calcutta is the most expensive port in the East; a steamer which could cover its marine charges at Bombay for Rs. 650, and for not exceeding Rs. 500 in any other port, would in Calcutta have to pay not less than Rs. 1,500. No doubt, the excess cost of visiting Calcutta was partly due to the

length of the river and the consequently high piloting charge, but this circumstance only rendered it more incumbent on those administering our Port Trust to keep their fees within the Port itself as low as possible consistently with efficiency. Those whose avocations take them on the river cannot contemplate the long line of river wall with its jetties, sheds, tramways, hydraulic cranes, floating cranes, steam barges, fire engines, hoppers, and even steam yachts, without appreciating the praise bestowed by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor upon the untiring energy of the Vice-Chairman of the trust, but admiration for the *Hausmann* of the Hooghly is damped by the reflection that, when carried too far, these things cease to be of advantage to a port through their cost becoming a burden upon trade. Those who know Liverpool, with its miles of magnificent docks and palatial warehouses fitted up with all the appliances that engineering skill can produce at the call of capital, will remember also by how long a period, in Birkenhead across the Mersey, the provision for trade anticipated the commerce it was intended to attract. There docks were not long ago to be seen whose waters were never rippled by the keel of any vessel, whilst the grass grew between the stones of the dock quays, and the stranger wandered through streets and squares of houses, not only tenantless but unfinished, their

bare skeletons, windowless and roofless, pointing the moral of *festina lente*. In Liverpool itself the heavy dock charges, necessitated by the lavish expenditure of the Dock Board, had largely defeated the object with which the money was spent and had driven away business in lieu of attracting it. Mr. Morrison thought, with the speakers who had preceded him, that the considerable surplus annually shown in the port accounts furnished good ground for a strong representation to Government in favour of the reduction of the port charges, and that the time had come when any further works for the benefit of those who should succeed the present generation of merchants should be provided for by loans repayable by posterity. The possessors of cash balances, investments, and property reaching a value of nearly $1\frac{1}{4}$ crore of rupees, and with an income of 18 lacs per annum, would find no difficulty in borrowing on the most favourable terms; and but a small portion of the annual surplus now shown would be required to meet the charges of interest, leaving the balance free to be applied in reduction of the charges on commerce, instead of as now, being thrown into the yawning jaws of iron, and the red abyss of bricks and mortar, which, like the chasm of Curtius of old, gaped in the midst of the community to receive the fruits of their labour.

The Chairman's motion was then put and carried unanimously.

The Chairman then proposed and Mr. J. W. O'Keefe seconded :—"That the Committee's conditional election of Messrs. Edmands Brothers and Co., and of Messrs. Sigg, Sultzer and Co. as members of the Chamber be confirmed."

The proposal was unanimously confirmed.

Mr. H. B. H. Turner gave notice that at the next general meeting of the Chamber he would move an amendment of the existing schedule in regard to the tonnage measurement of bales of cotton, jute, and other similarly packed articles, which according to the Chamber's schedule are 50 cubic feet to the ton, whereas by general custom and agreement 5 bales not exceeding 52 cubic feet constituted the measurement ton.

Mr. Turner was of opinion that the schedule should be in conformity with the custom of the port, and that the proposed amendment, of which he now gave notice, was necessary to protect those who, ignorant of the custom, might enter into agreements for the loading of vessels upon the Chamber's schedule, which agreements, as the schedule stood, would be found impracticable.

The meeting terminated with a unanimous vote of thanks to the Chairman.

H. W. I. WOOD,

Secretary.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Report of the Committee for the half-year ended 31st October 1880.

THE Committee submit their Report on the principal subjects which have had their attention during the past half-year.

IMPORT DUTY ON COTTON GOODS.

Members of the Chamber are aware of the great trouble and anxiety which the action of the Collector of Customs has caused to importers of cotton goods coming under the duty-free denomination. The correspondence given below shows the position the Committee have taken up in this matter, and they are glad to record that their views generally have been accepted by the Bengal Government. A recent communication, however, from the Government of India to the local Government, while in some respects satisfactory, still leaves the ground open for future disputes; and the Committee propose addressing the Government of India on the subject.

From Chamber to the Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 21st September 1880.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to address you on the subject of the Sea Customs Act No. VIII of 1878, and of the Notification No. 59 of 13th March 1879, the working of which has become so intolerable that departmental orders are absolutely necessary to prevent the injustice which is being done to manufacturers and importers of cotton goods.

The Act, though found at first to work comparatively smoothly, could not be expected to provide for contingencies which have arisen under that notification, and its penal clauses could not have been designed to meet all cases which might subsequently occur; and therefore large discretionary power was vested in the Collector.

There seems, however, to be a tendency on the part of the Customs officials to suspect all Lancashire manufacturers of endeavouring to defraud the revenue; there may be dishonest manufacturers, but the Committee deny that a great majority deserve to be so considered. To visit with the same penalty those whose cloth shows a mere fractional percentage of fine yarns, and those whose attempt to defraud is obvious, cannot be justified: in the latter case the full penalty may justly be inflicted, but in the former the penalty of paying duty on the whole invoice would be an extreme punishment for the irregularity.

Any one conversant with the internal economy of a cotton mill must know how easily cops of yarn may get mixed; and as the most experienced eye cannot tell the difference between dutiable and duty-free weft, without

such close examination as is impracticable without seriously impeding the work of the loom, it may well be that a portion of the finer counts might get woven into the cloth without detection. Again, contiguous rows of looms might be at work on different cloths, and the weaver to save himself the trouble of going to the cop room for a fresh supply, might, when near closing time, take a cop from his neighbour's basket to finish up with. In various other ways, and unknown to the manufacturer, a slight admixture occurs, and the consequences, under the present ruling of the Customs, are that instead of a fine, proportionate to the merits of the case, the manufacturer is liable to the entire confiscation of his goods. The Committee submit that no such penalty could possibly be intended to apply to mere acts of inadvertence or of accident; for if so, what, they ask, could be intended as punishment on conviction of deliberate fraud?

The following instances of the working of the Act, as interpreted by the Customs authorities, will be sufficient to show the nature of the hardships complained of.

5 bales per Steamer "Discoverer," each bale containing 100 pieces=500 pieces 28-in. 24 yards 4lb. Grey T. Cloth.

One bale containing 100 pieces was examined by the Customs (the other four bales having been previously delivered to buyers), and 24 pieces only were alleged to contain yarn finer than 30*s*., the remaining 76 pieces being passed as all right.

According to the certificate furnished by the Customs, the 24 pieces are said to contain fine weft, in patches,

varying from 8 inches to 4 yards in each piece, none of the pieces being entirely made of fine weft.

Taking 2 yards as the average of fine yarns in each piece, the total length would be 240 yards, on which the duty would have amounted to about 7 annas altogether.

Ten leas were tested by the wrap-reel at the Custom House, one lea of over 30*s*, and one lea of under 30*s* yarn, from each of five different pieces with the following results :—

	1 lea.	1 lea.	1 lea.	1 lea.	1 lea.
Fine weft wrapped	32*s*-33*s*	33*s*-34*s*	34*s*	34*s*-35*s*	35*s*-36*s*.
	1 lea.	1 lea.	2 leas.	1 lea.	
Coarse weft wrapped	24*s*	25*s*-26*s*	26*s*	27*s*-28*s*.	

A fine was imposed of Rs. 1,000, and the bale was confiscated, but was re-purchased for Rs. 250, making a total penalty of Rs. 1,250.

The following three cases relate to goods from one manufacturer :—

Case No. 1.—Ten bales ex Str. "Counsellor," each containing 400 pairs 9½ yards Grey Dhooties.

One bale was retained at, and two were returned to, the Custom House. Seven bales had been delivered into the bazar when the Collector's application for them was received. Of 260 pairs examined 30 were alleged to contain 55 yards of fine weft.

Case No. 2.—One bale ex Str. "City of Khios," containing 400 pairs 9½ yards Grey Dhooties, retained at the Custom House. One hundred pairs were examined, and eight were "found to contain fine weft apparently throughout."

Case No. 3.—Six bales ex Str. "Mira," 5 containing each 400 pairs, and one 374 pairs 9½ yards Grey Dhooties.

One bale was retained at the Custom House; five bales had been delivered into the bazar when the Collector's application for them was received. On examination of the one bale retained, "several pieces" were "found to contain yarn finer than 30s which, on testing by the wrap-reel, proves to range from 36s to 39s.

The results may be summarised as follows:—

	Case No. 1.	Case No. 2.	Case No. 3.
No. of yards in invoice ...	38,000	3,800	22,553
„ „ „ examined ...	2,470	950	*
„ „ „ alleged to be woven with fine weft ...	55	76	*
Percentage of fine weft to total weft	2¼	8	*
„ „ „ „ cloth	1	3½	*
„ penalty to amount of duty leviable on fine weft ...	100,000	57,218	*
Amount of duty leviable on fine weft	Rs. 2-8 As.	12-7	*
Value of the goods ...	5,000 Rs.	450 Rs.	2,516
Penalty inflicted ...	2,500 „	450 „	1,425
Consisting of—Fine ...	1,000 „	... „	1,000
Confiscation ...	1,500 „	450 „	425
Possible gain to the manufacturer if the fine weft were 36s instead of 30s ...	3s. 4½d.	1s. 3d.	
„ if 40s. instead of 30s,	5s. 8½d.	2s. 1d.	

* Not ascertained.

Affidavits were produced to prove that the manufacturer had bought specifically sufficient 30s weft to complete the goods, and that 30s were not required for any goods concurrently in process at his mill. Therefore the presumption, amounting almost to certainty, is that the 30s

supplanted by finer weft in the penalized goods were incorporated in goods on which duty has been paid. In this case it is obvious that the revenue has not suffered, nor the manufacturer benefited even to the infinitesimal extent possible on the assumption of fraudulent intent.

The following imaginary cases are submitted to illustrate the inequality which arises under the Collector's treatment of "all cases alike":—

A. One hundred bales, value Rs. 20,000, 99 of which have been delivered into the bazar before the detection of 3 per cent. of fine weft.

B. The same, but no bales delivered.

C. Five bales, value Rs. 1,000, none delivered; one per cent. of dutiable weft detected.

		A.	B.	C.
Value of consignments ...	Rs.	20,000	20,000	1,000
Duty leviable on fine weft ...	„	30	30	8 Ans.
Penalty inflicted ...	„	1,200	21,000	2,000
Consisting of—Fine	„	1,000	1,000	1,000
Confiscation	„	200	20,000	1,000
Percentage of penalty to amount of duty leviable on fine weft ...	„	4,000	70,000	4,00,000

In regard to these instances the Committee draw special attention to the exceedingly small proportion of fine yarns found in each parcel, and to the fact that the incorporation of this fine yarn in the cloth could not have saved the manufacturer anything in the cost of the goods, and also to the absurdly small amount of duty which would be leviable if the whole yardage of fine yarns was made chargeable with duty.

When the Committee in a late correspondence with the Collector of Customs, (as per copy annexed,) agreed with him that an unqualified declaration ought to be made by the importer, they added that satisfactory explanations should be held sufficient to remit the responsibility attaching to wrong declarations; and the Collector promised to deal leniently with cases where it was clearly shown that mis-description or mis-statement was purely the result of clerical error or inadvertence; but instead of carrying out his promise he interprets the Act in its most rigorous sense.

Much stress is laid by the Collector on the Chamber's expressed concurrence in his view as to the obligations of importers. The Committee repeat that all proper means for the careful protection of the Customs revenue are essential; but they must at the same time disclaim any intention of countenancing an absolute forfeiture of property except in proved cases of deliberate wrong-doing.

The above and similar cases, the Committee respectfully submit, should be classed as inadvertences; they are clearly the result of ignorance, of want of care, or of laziness on the part of a factory hand; and to make merchants or manufacturers responsible for such faults of a workman to the extent of the whole value of the goods is, the Committee submit, an application of the law which was not intended, and which cannot be supported with any show of justice.

The Collector has said that, as in no case has there been any ground for supposing that the merchant here has acted otherwise than *bonâ fide*, he must in fairness deal with all cases on the same lines; but it seems to the

Committee that the object of leaving such large discretionary power in his hands was that he should exercise it when necessary. In acting as he has done, the Collector has lost sight of the object he states he had in view, *viz.*, to avoid inequalities in the penalties imposed, for he has confiscated all goods, whether the proportion of fine yarns was found to be 100 per cent. or the fraction only of 1 per cent.

Hitherto it has been assumed that the manufacturer can be held responsible, and that the importer will be able without difficulty to recover from him, but the case has not yet been tried, and it is by no means certain that he can be so held responsible. Be that, however, as it may, the Committee think that the Lancashire manufacturer is as much entitled to protection as the importer himself.

The Committee trust that a complete investigation will be made of the whole subject, with a view to a refund of the fines which, in their opinion, have been unjustly imposed, as well as of the value of all goods confiscated. Meanwhile they hope that orders will be issued to the Customs authorities to exercise the discretion which they possess, and to apportion the penalty in each case as it arises according to the nature of the offence, and thereby put an end to the wholesale confiscation which is now going on.

From Collector to Chamber,

No. 1494, *3rd May* 1880.

I have the honor to request that you will ask the Committee of your Chamber to favor me with an expression

of their opinion as to the best means of overcoming a difficulty which has arisen between myself and certain importers of grey cotton piece-goods.

2. By a notification which appeared in the *Calcutta Gazette* of 2nd April, the Chief Customs authority, under the power given by Section 86, Act VIII., 1878, ordered that in the case of cotton piece-goods claiming free entry the bill of entry should contain a declaration to the effect that the goods contained no finer yarn than 30*s*.

3. Since it has been discovered that goods so declared (on the faith of certificates furnished by the manufacturer or factor) are frequently found to contain much finer yarns in larger or smaller proportions, importers have been introducing into their declarations qualifying terms, such as "to the best of our knowledge and belief," or "should the goods prove to contain finer yarn we are to pay duty under protest."

4. Apart from the legal aspect of the case, which I do not propose now to discuss, it will at once be evident that such a declaration conveys in itself that there is at least a doubt in the mind of the importer that his goods are not entitled to free entry. Under such circumstances, and with a view to the necessary protection of the Government Revenue, the examination of a parcel of goods must inevitably be most searching. This would, in my opinion, lead to much annoyance and loss to the importer himself, and cause great delay in the Custom House to the inconvenience of the public generally, for if such declarations are accepted generally, and the entire onus of the question of free or dutiable goods is thrown on the

Appraising Department, there cannot but result great delay both in respect of cotton goods as well as of general merchandize.

5. I am therefore of opinion that such qualified declarations from a commercial point of view are undesirable, as importers, under the latter clause of Section 29, Act VIII., 1878, have every facility for ascertaining what yarns their goods are made of, and that an importer should take ordinary precautions to protect himself from the penalties of mis-description, and I should be glad to know if the Chamber of Commerce has any reason to dissent from the view I have taken.

6. I shall be obliged by the favor of an early reply.

From Chamber to the Collector of Customs.

Calcutta, 11*th May* 1880.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have had under consideration your letter No. 1494 of the 3rd instant, and they direct me to express their concurrence in the view you take of the subject brought to notice.

They are of opinion that an importer of merchandise of any description should be in a position to specifically declare its character, quality, and value, and that there should be no necessity for any qualified declaration, except under exceptional circumstances, such as the inadvertent absence of invoices, or certificates, or other requisite means of correctly describing the contents of packages in bills of entry.

If an importer fails to adopt ordinary precautions to protect himself against the penal provisions of the Customs

Act, the inconvenient consequences are clearly attributable to his own neglect; if he suffers by the misrepresentations of others he has his remedy against them; but in either case it appears to the Committee that it is only reasonable and proper that the Government revenue should be carefully protected.

Whilst giving this opinion, the Committee desire to remind you that, in making declarations, mistakes, such as clerical errors, may frequently occur through no fault of the importer or of the manufacturer, and in such cases they hope that any satisfactory explanation given will be held sufficient to remit the responsibility attaching to such wrong declarations.

From Collector to Chamber,—

No. 1613, *13th May* 1880.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 11th instant, for which I am obliged.

2. I fully recognise the importance of the opinion expressed in your last paragraph, and am always prepared to deal leniently with cases where it is clearly shown that mis description or mis-statement is purely the result of clerical error or inadvertence.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber,—

No. 651*T. Darjeeling, the* 25*th September* 1880.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 21st September 1880, with its enclosures, representing the hardship to which manfacturers and importers of cotton piece-goods are subjected,

by the arbitrary application of the penal clauses of the Sea Customs Act VIII. of 1878, by the Customs authorities, in cases coming under the notification of the Government of India No. 59 of the 13th March 1879.

In reply, I am to forward, for the information of the Chamber of Commerce, the accompanying copy of a Resolution, dated the 24th September 1880, by this Government, on the subject, and to say that it was issued before the receipt at head-quarters of your letter under acknowledgment. The Chamber will observe that the Lieutenant-Governor has held that the penalties of confiscation and fine need only be imposed in extreme cases, but that duty is leviable in cases where the requirements of the Government of India Notification of 13th March 1879 are not fully complied with.

RESOLUTION.

READ the following:—

1. Letter from Messrs. Williamson Brothers, without date, received on the 26th June 1880, appealing against an order of the Board of Revenue, confirming an order of the Collector of Customs, Calcutta, confiscating certain cotton piece-goods imported by the appellants.

2. Letter from the Board of Revenue, No. 560B, dated 22nd July 1880, reporting on the foregoing.

3. Endorsement from the Government of India, in the Department of Finance and Commerce, dated 31st July 1880, forwarding, for disposal, a letter from Messrs. Carlisles, Nephews & Co.,

dated the 17th July 1880, appealing against the orders of the Board in a similar case to the above.

4. Letter from the Board of Revenue, No. 654B, dated the 31st August 1880, reporting on the foregoing.

5. Letter from Messrs. Williamson Brothers, dated the 6th August 1880, in continuation of their former representation (No. 1 above.)

6. Letter from the Board of Revenue, No. 714B, dated 18th September 1880, with reference to the foregoing.

7. Letter from Messrs. Carlisles, Nephews & Co., dated 9th September 1880, in continuation of their former representation (No. 3 above).

UNDER the Government of India Notification, No. 59 of the 13th March 1879, certain descriptions of cotton grey piece-goods, "shown to the satisfaction of the Customs Collector, whose decision shall be final, to be of the dimensions, weights, counts and quantities now generally known under those descriptions, *and to contain no yarn of a higher number than* 30s," were exempted from import duty.

2. By section 29 of the Customs Act, every importer is bound to state in his bill-of-entry "the real value, quantity, and description of the goods imported by him, to the best of his knowledge and belief," and must "sign a declaration of the truth of such statement at the foot of such bill." The Collector has, under the same section, power to require the production of any invoice or other

document whereby the real value, quantity, or description of the goods can be ascertained, and to call upon the importer to furnish any information in his possession relative to these points. But if the importer declares that he is unable, from want of full information, to state the real value or contents of any case, package, or parcel of goods, then the Customs Collector is bound to permit him, *previous to the entry thereof,* to open the goods and examine the contents in presence of an officer of Customs, after which the importer must, under the first part of the section, fill in his own bill-of-entry. The Customs authorities are in no way responsible for, and ought not, under any circumstances, to accept, the responsibility for the correct filling in of the bill-of-entry. Their duty is to check the statements in the bill-of-entry, and to satisfy themselves, by evidence or by examination, that the particulars given by the importer are correct, and to assess duty or grant free passes accordingly.

3. Under section 86 of the Act, the Board of Revenue, as the chief Customs authority, are empowered to prescribe in respect of any class of goods such additional particulars, in addition to those specified in section 29, as they may think it necessary to have in the bill-of-entry; and under section 167, clause 37 (*b*) and (*c*), if it be found that the contents of any package have been wrongly described in the bill-of-entry (as drawn up with reference to section 86), whether as regards the denominations, characters, or conditions according to which such goods are chargeable with duty; or if the contents of such packages have been mis-stated in regard to sort, quality, quantity, or value, and such circumstance is not

accounted for to the satisfaction of the Customs Collector, the packages and goods are liable to confiscation, and every person concerned in the offence is liable to a penalty not exceeding Rs. 1,000. In the case of piece-goods claiming free entry under the Government of India notification of the 13th March 1879, the Board have ordered, under section 86, that there must be a specific declaration in the bill-of-entry that the goods contained no yarn of a higher number than 30s. This is clearly an order that the Board were legally empowered to give; and that it was, under the circumstances of the piece-goods market, a proper order, appears to be admitted by the Chamber of Commerce, to whom the Collector of Customs referred the point. The Chamber of Commerce wrote—

"They are of opinion that an importer of merchandise of any description should be in a position to specifically declare its character, quality, and value, and that there should be no necessity for any qualified declaration, except under exceptional circumstances, such as the inadvertent absence of invoices or certificates, or other requisite means of correctly describing the contents of packages in bills-of-entry. If an importer fails to adopt ordinary precautions to protect himself against the penal provisions of the Customs Act, the inconvenient consequences are clearly attributable to his own neglect: if he suffers by the misrepresentations of others, he has his remedy against them; but in either case, it appears to the Committee that it is only reasonable and proper that the Government revenue should be carefully protected."

4. Strictly speaking, the Customs Collector is bound to satisfy himself, before any imported goods leave his

custody, either that they are really duty-free, or that they have been properly assessed to duty under the Tariff Act. But in order to meet the convenience of the firms trading in piece-goods, the practice has been to allow the importer, upon his making the declaration in his bill-of-entry that the goods contain no yarns of higher number than 30s, to remove at once, without inspection, all the bales of the consignment covered by the bill, with the exception of one bale, selected at random, which is kept for examination. The importer, for his own convenience, agrees in fact to stand by the results of the examination of the specimen bale. If this is found to correspond with the description in the bill-of-entry, the whole consignment is passed free without further question. If any of the pieces in the bale are found to contain fine yarn, the importer is requested to return for further examination the bales already delivered. It frequently happens, however, that the importers have already made these over to buyers, and are not in a position to return them.

5. In the cases of the appellants, and recently in many other similar cases, the examination of the test-bales has resulted in the discovery of pieces containing patches, varying in length from a few inches to over 38 yards, made of yarn of higher numbers than 30s. In some instances, whole pieces made of such finer yarn have been discovered. The Customs Collector, considering, under these circumstances, that the goods had been mis-described as containing no yarn finer than 30s, has usually confiscated the bales which he had in his possession, giving importers, under section 183, the option of taking

delivery on payment of a fine, and called upon them to return for examination the bales removed by them. On their failure to return these, a fine under section 167, clause 37, has been inflicted as a sort of set-off, the reasonable presumption being that these bales also would have been liable to confiscation.

6. On behalf of the appellants it is urged that the occurrence of small patches of finer weft in duty-free piece-goods is entirely the result of accident; that when goods of different wefts are being woven in the same shed, it is quite possible for some of the "cops" of finer yarn to get mixed up with the coarser; that this carelessness is no advantage to the manufacturer, as it injures the uniform character of his goods, and he only gets the price of coarse material for the piece into which the fine yarn is woven. It is further argued that the penalty of confiscation is only intended for cases of undoubted fraud, and that the Customs authorities ought to determine, before the completion of the bill-of-entry, whether goods are entitled to be admitted duty-free, so as to give the importer certainty in filling up his bill-of-entry.

7. On the other hand, the Customs authorities hold that if they, for the convenience of the trade, relax the system of examination of goods, they must, for the protection of the revenue, retain in their hands a strong deterrent against abuse of the advantage, and be allowed to inflict appreciable penalties in cases of detected misdescription. In the cases under notice it is admitted that the importer here is not to blame, the misdescription being given on the faith of the advices and invoices of he home manufacturer. Hence the Customs authorities are always ready to give the importer certificates, in

cases of confiscation, upon which he can and in some instances has recovered from the manufacturers. It is shown that under section 167, clause 37 *(b)*, and *(c)*, the Collector has not to decide upon the intention of the person wrongly describing the goods. Confiscation may be inflicted as a penalty for misdescription, whether arising from fraud or carelessness. The case of Mohendro Nath Dutt appears to have been treated by the Customs authorities as a kind of test-case. It was referred by the Collector to experts in the trade, and a copy of their report is attached to this Resolution. It is now stated that the total amount of fine weft in this case was $10\frac{3}{4}$ yards to a bale of 2,000 yards. In no case has confiscation been imposed as a penalty where the amount of admixture has been less than this. It must also be borne in mind, with reference to the question of the manufacturer's intentions, that the Customs authorities are not in a position to judge of these; and it is urged, on their behalf, that the amount of admixture is in many instances so large as to make it quite impossible to attribute it to anything but intention or the grossest form of carelessness; and that it is by no means improbable that the intention may be to test the character of the Customs examination, with a view to passing in dutiable goods hereafter. Circumstances have occurred at times which make this last supposition anything but unreasonable, and it is a contingency which the Customs authorities must at least bear in mind. The manufacturer, knowing well the orders of the Indian Government, is bound to exercise due care in his manufacture; and though it may be unfortunate that he should only be reached through the importer, no other course is open to the Customs authorities here.

8. On considering all the facts and arguments, the Lieutenant-Governor feels bound to decide that the Customs Collector and Board of Revenue have been technically and legally right in their procedure throughout. The importer is bound to make an unqualified declaration in his bill-of-entry. The Customs Collector is not at liberty to decide, before entry, whether goods are free or dutiable. Confiscation and fine may be imposed for misdescription, without there being any positive proof or even suspicion of fraud. But, at the same time, the Lieutenant-Governor does not think that it is necessary or desirable to impose severe penalties as a matter of course in every case, such as those now under notice. The Revenue can be sufficiently protected by other means.

9. If importers wish to see the present system of quick delivery on the faith of an unqualified declaration in the bill-of-entry and the subsequent examination of a test-bale maintained, they must consent to stand by the results of the examination of that bale, and must make such arrangements with the manufacturers as will secure them from loss by mistakes or otherwise. If, then, the sample bale is found to contain *any* admixture of fine yarn of higher numbers than 30s, the goods are, both under the terms of section 21 of the Act and of the Government notification of 13th March 1879, undoubtedly liable to duty, and the whole consignment which that bale represents ought to be charged with duty. In the Lieutenant-Governor's opinion it would, in ordinary cases, be quite sufficient to assess the goods as dutiable. The penalties of confiscation and fine should be reserved for those cases in which the admixture of fine yarns is so great as to warrant the inference of bad faith or gross care-

lessness. The Lieutenant-Governor is disposed to hold that, if the amount of fine yarn in the bale is over 2 per cent., or if an entire piece of fine material is discovered, the case calls for the infliction of some penalty, though not necessarily the full penalty allowed by section 167, clause 37. The Collector should insist on the payment of duty as a matter of course, and inflict penalty with reference to all the circumstances of the case, using a just discretion.

10. The Lieutenant-Governor thinks that the Board of Revenue should now pass fresh orders in the cases under appeal, in accordance with the principles laid down in the foregoing paragraph, and they are at liberty to decide any similar representations in the same way. They can remit any penalties already imposed where these are not in harmony with the orders now passed. If importers are not satisfied with this arrangement, they can leave their consignments for examination before delivery in accordance with the strict requirements of the law. The Collector would of course in that case, on discovering any admixture of fine yarns in a bale, examine all the bales of that consignment, unless duty were paid without further demur.

ORDER.—Ordered that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Board of Revenue for information and guidance, and communication to the Collector of Customs.

Also that a copy be forwarded to Messrs. Carlisles, Nephews & Co., and Messrs. Williamson Brothers, with reference to their letters quoted at the heading of the Resolution.

Also that a copy, with copies of the Board's letters quoted in the heading, be submitted to the Government of India, in the Department of Finance and Commerce.

Report on Mohendro Nath Dutt's case, drawn up by Customs Collector and signed by experts.

On receipt of the Board's order, Mohendro Nath Dutt was requested to attend at the Custom House, and on doing so was allowed to select a piece of cloth for examination. The yarn was unravelled, and sealed up in the presence of himself or persons chosen by him. By some chance he had selected a piece in which all except a very insignificant portion of the yarn was undoubtedly 30s. This led to a strict examination of all the 50 pieces in the bale; and it was discovered that 14 pieces out of the 50 were clearly woven of yarn, in some places 30s, and in others of much finer yarn, which would at once disqualify them for free entry, and portions of the latter were also unravelled. I then requested Messrs. Craik, of Williamson Brothers, and O'Keefe, of Kettlewell, Bullen & Co., gentlemen whose character is beyond question, to attend at the Custom House on Monday, 24th November, at which time Mohendro Nath Dutt accompanied by Mr. Turnbull, also an impartial and skilled expert of similar character, were present. These gentlemen saw the yarn which had been unravelled from the piece selected on behalf of Mohendro Nath Dutt tested by the wrap-reel, and, as I have said before, it was found to be of 30s. These gentlemen also examined the pieces of cloth in which there was a mixture of yarn of 30s, and yarns finer than 30s, and yarn of the latter description unravelled from these cloths; and the introduction of the yarn finer than 30s, and the fineness of the yarn was so unmistakable and clearly defined, that they expressed themselves perfectly satisfied, without resorting to the test of the wrap-reel, that the cloths were not such

as could come in under the designation of goods containing no yarn finer than 30s, and that the yarns were much finer than 30s. Mr. Turnbull was inclined to think that the introduction of the finer yarn (*in the extreme case* amounting to three yards two feet in 38½ yards) was not necessarily intentional or wilful. Messrs. Craik and O'Keefe were not prepared to go so far, considering that the amount of carelessness in manufacture was violently improbable and most discreditable to the manufacturer. I have shewn this statement of facts to these gentlemen, and they have certified to its correctness.

Signed by { W. CRAIK, J. W. O'KEEFE, R. TURNBULL.

The 24th November 1879.

From Chamber to the Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 5th October 1880.

I am instructed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 651T, dated 25th September, with copy of a Resolution on the subject of the working of the Sea Customs Act VIII. of 1878, in connection with the Notification No. 59 of the 13th March 1879.

The Committee observe with satisfaction that the Lieutenant-Governor, although judging that under the provisions of the Act the Collector of Customs and the Board of Revenue have been *technically* and *legally* right in the procedure against which they appealed, has ruled that the penalties of fine and confiscation need only be imposed in extreme cases; His Honor seems, however,

to hold that duty should be levied in all cases where goods are found to contain *any* admixture of yarn finer than 30s; that if the amount of light yarn in a bale is over 2 per cent., or if an entire piece of fine material is discovered, there should further be the infliction of a fine, and that cases warranting the inferences of bad faith or gross carelessness should be visited by the extreme penalties of fine and confiscation.

The Committee hope to be able to convince the Lieutenant-Governor that this ruling, although to an important extent modifying the intolerable hardships of which they complained, will still result in great injustice being done to importers or manufacturers, who, under it, must often suffer more or less severely from the results of pure accident which no amount of care could prevent.

The Collector of Customs has put much stress upon an opinion expressed by the Committee, that an importer should be in a position (except under exceptional circumstances) to specifically declare the character and quality of his merchandise, but unfortunately the qualifying clause at the end of the letter from which the quotation has been given, and his own reply, have apparently been lost sight of.

The letter in question ended with the following para:—
"Whilst giving this opinion, the Committee desire me "to remind you that, in making declarations, mistakes, "such as clerical errors, may frequently occur through no "fault of the importer or of the manufacturer, and in "such cases they hope that any satisfactory explanation "given will be held sufficient to remit the responsibility "attaching to such wrong declarations."

And in reply, the Collector wrote :—"I fully recognise "the importance of the opinion expressed in your last "paragraph, and am always prepared to deal leniently "with cases where it is clearly shown that mis-description "or mis-statement is purely the result of clerical error "or inadvertence."

At the time of giving this opinion, no such cases as those with which the Collector has recently dealt had come under the notice of the Committee, and they could hardly have foreseen that such were likely to occur, otherwise they would have considered it requisite to qualify, in a more decided manner, their opinion in regard to the importer's duty to declare the character of his goods, and the necessity for the Collector to use a wise discretion.

The Collector, however, did this himself, for the word "inadvertence," which he has used, would certainly apply to most of the cases in which he has lately inflicted the fullest penalties which the law permitted, even had those cases been of deliberate and proved fraud.

The Act provides that when the importer is unable, from want of full information, to state the real value or contents of any case, the Collector is bound to permit him, "previous to the entry thereof," to examine the contents in the presence of an officer of Customs. This permission, however, becomes of little or no value when by accident a small admixture of fine yarn has found its way into the cloth, because the mistake might easily escape the eye of the importer and yet be discovered subsequently by the appraiser; and as this officer has to be present at this examination, the Committee do not

see why he should not, under such circumstances, then decide whether the goods are dutiable or free.

Section 167, Clause 37 *(b)* and *(c)*, provides penalties for wrong description or mis-statement in bill-of-entry, *if such is not accounted for to the satisfaction of the Collector;* but this qualifying clause has, in recent procedure, been entirely ignored, for the system has been to treat all cases alike—quite irrespective of the circumstances and of the explanation given. In the language of commerce it is no mis-statement to declare goods to be made of 30s if the quantity of finer yarn in them is within the margin which the accidents inseparable from manufacture render unavoidable.

The Committee believe it to be in the interests of importers that the present system of quick delivery should be maintained, and that they should stand by the results of the examination of a test bale, and they are most desirous that the Government revenue should be carefully protected; but they maintain that this should not be at the expense of the importer or manufacturer whose cloth, unknown to him, may contain here and there an accidental admixture of dutiable yarns.

How this accidental admixture may occur has been fully detailed in the Chamber's letter of 21st September, and the Committee would only add that even the finding in a bale a whole piece, or pieces, woven entirely with fine yarns does not necessarily imply that a fraud was intended, because when different kinds of goods are being packed in the same warehouse it has not unfrequently happened that they have got mixed; but in such cases the Collector should have no difficulty in determining

whether the circumstances were accidental or otherwise. The Committee cannot press too strongly the fact, that to be of any benefit to the manufacturer in cheapening the cost of his cloth, the admixture of fine yarns must be of an important extent, and that even then he runs the risk of getting the cloth rejected by the purchaser at home, who of course will not willingly receive goods of irregular or thinner texture than he has contracted for.

In the so-called "test case," the value of the fine yarn introduced was about one penny less than the 30s which it displaced, and only 3½ pies duty would have been leviable on the whole quantity of the finer yarn. The Committee cannot concur in any opinion which regards these trifling irregularities as implying fraudulent intent, and cannot agree that any moderation has been shown which is based on the assertion that no goods have been confiscated for a smaller admixture.

The Lieutenant-Governor rules that if the sample bale is found to contain *any* admixture of yarn of higher numbers than 30s, the whole invoice is undoubtedly liable to duty, both under Section 21 of the Act, and under the Notification of 13th March 1879; and under this ruling the Collector has already taken action in the following cases which have just been brought to the notice of the Committee :—

Case A :—50 bales Grey Shirtings ex S. S. "Vega."

No. 6,467 = 50 pieces = 1,950 yards examined: 1 piece = 39 yards contained 18 inches of fine weft; 1 lea tested 43-44s.

Case B :—26 bales Grey Shirtings ex S. S. "Vega."

Nos 6,569 } 100 pieces=3,900 yards examined: 19 pieces=741 yards contained 20 yards
" 6,578 } 31 inches fine weft: 2 leas tested 41-42s.

In case A, out of 1,950 yards examined it would thus appear that only 18 inches, or ·025 per cent, and in case B

out of 3,900 yards only 20 yards 31 inches, or ·535 per cent. have been found to contain fine yarns: and for this infinitesimal admixture, the result, undoubtedly, of inadvertence, the Collector has imposed duty-penalties of Rs. 547-14-0 and Rs. 284-14-0, respectively; thus showing that the orders issued by His Honor, although intended to mitigate the penalties, have actually resulted in the infliction of a punishment for accidents so unimportant that they would before have been passed over.

His Honor is disposed to hold, that if the amount of fine yarn in a bale is over 2 per cent., or if an entire piece made of the finer material is discovered, some penalty, in addition to duty, is called for; but the Committee respectfully urge that in both cases they have shown that the mistake might be of so purely accidental a nature as not to call for any punishment.

The penalties of confiscation and fine in cases warranting the inference of bad faith are not, the Committee think, too severe; but to place gross carelessness in the same category as fraud is, they submit, a mistake: gross carelessness undoubtedly deserves some punishment, but if the object be to prevent its recurrence, a much less severe one than confiscation (which is the extreme penalty for fraud) would have an equally good effect and be more suited to the circumstances.

In conclusion, the Committee respectfully suggest that some modification of the law or of its interpretation is required to meet the peculiar circumstances which have arisen; that the Collector should not be obliged to insist on the payment of duty as a matter of course, and that he should be instructed to regulate his penalties

with reference to all the circumstances of each case, and to use that just discretion which His Honor has suggested, and which would appear of late to have been so entirely forgotten.

They would, moreover, submit, with reference to the permission given in the 10th paragraph of the Resolution to the Board of Revenue to remit any penalties already imposed, that those orders be made peremptory, and that the amounts that have been paid in the shape of duty, fine, or confiscation should, in all cases where fraud was evidently never attempted, be returned.

Chamber of Commerce.

Manchester, 5th October 1880.

My Lord Marquis,—On behalf of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, I respectfully beg to call attention to the hardship inflicted on many of its members, both merchants and manufacturers, by the manner in which the Customs authorities of Calcutta have for some time past proceeded to carry out the Sea Customs' Act, No. 8 of 1878, in connection with the notification No. 59 of 13th March 1879, which provides for the admission free of duty of grey cotton goods made of yarns not finer than 30s warp and weft. The Directors of this Chamber need hardly assure your Lordship that they have no sympathy with those who would knowingly defraud the Government by attempting to pass as duty free goods not fairly so entitled under the above named provision, or that nothing would induce them to advocate any mitigation of penalties, however severe, with which such malpractices might be visited, but they desire to point out that in a

trade of so great detail as the manufacturing and packing of cotton goods, it is impossible always to avoid mistakes, and that for mere inadvertence it appears to them that confiscation of the goods or the levying of a fine equal thereto, is a course of procedure so harsh as not to accord with the treatment usually received by the English people at the hands of Government. In illustration of the cases to which I refer, and to the liability to slight mistakes on the part of the makers and shippers of cloth, I beg to hand the accompanying communications from members of the Chamber of the highest standing summarising instances of the procedure to which I refer, and regarding which unsuccessful appeals have been made to the Board of Inland Revenue at Calcutta. The original documents referred to will be found in that office, but I shall have pleasure in obtaining copies, if desired. Many of these are already in the possession of the Chamber, and have been fully considered by a committee specially chosen for the purpose of investigating the circumstances connected with the cases in question, which I may further remark are only a few of the number reported. On the perusal of the summaries referred to, your Lordship, I venture to think, will share the opinion that there has been no intention to defraud the Government, and that the admixture of fine yarns in some pieces has arisen accidentally from the fact that the manufacturers were at one and the same time making cloths of 30s yarns for India, and in the same weaving shed, probably other cloths very similar in appearance, but of finer yarns, either to meet a continuing demand for such duty-paying goods in India, or for shipment to China and other Eastern markets. In other cases it will be seen, as instanced

in the communication from Messrs. Ralli Brothers, that whole pieces, probably a few only, of dutiable goods have inadvertently been packed by the shipper amongst others intended to pass duty free. It is particularly worthy of notice that the admixture, whether of fine yarns in the same piece or of dutiable with duty free goods in the same package, has been to so small an extent as, if undetected, could have effected so inappreciable a saving to the manufacturer or shipper as would make it not worth while his running the risk of attempting to defraud. I respectfully beg to submit that even where culpable negligence is apparent the requirements of the case would be met either by levying the ordinary duty, or in instances of gross negligence by the imposition of, say double duty. I am not unmindful of the difficulties that must often attend the arriving at a conclusion as to whether the circumstances point to a wilful attempt at fraud or to accident, and to meet this difficulty I respectfully suggest that a committee of experts should be appointed in Calcutta, chosen from the mercantile community as having special knowledge of the trade. Such a committee, I may remark, was, at the instance of this Chamber, appointed to assist in the introduction of the Trade Marks' Act of 1875, with results which, I believe, were alike satisfactory to the Home Government, and, on the whole, to the commercial community. While suggesting the course just named for the purpose of investigating the cases of confiscation and of equivalent fines that have already occurred, and for the settlement of pending or immediate cases, I hope I may be permitted to remind your Lordship that this Chamder foresaw the very difficulty that has now arisen so far back as March 1878,

when a representation on the subject was made to your Lordship's then predecessor, the Marquis of Salisbury and it is the special desire of the Directors that I avail of the present opportunity to impress on your Lordship the extreme desirableness of the total and early abolition of the import duties on cotton goods, in favour of which they have so often and so earnestly appealed.

I have the honour to be, my Lord Marquis, your Lordship's obedient, humble servant,

B. ARMITAGE,

President.

The Most Hon. the Marquis of Hartington,

Secretary of State for India.

From Government of India to the Government of Bengal, No. 3968. *Simla, the* 3*rd December* 1880.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt with your endorsement No. 645T., dated 24th September 1880, of a Resolution by the Government of Bengal upon certain complaints about the action of the Calcutta Custom House, in regard to the customs duty on cotton grey piece-goods, and of your subsequent* communications on the same subject.

* No. 2956-1841., dated 7th October 1880.
No. 905T., dated 26th October 1880.
No. 1100T., dated 9th November 1880.

2. The principal subject of complaint is the levy of full duty, and also penalties, on certain goods which, though declared to contain no yarn of a higher number than 30s, were found, on examination, to contain patches of

finer yarn. Complaint is also made of the extent to which partial tests have been held to govern the liability of whole consignments to duty, confiscation, and fine.

3. The Government of India concurs with His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor in thinking that duty must be paid on any cloth which indisputably contains finer yarn than 30s, even in small quantities. But in determining whether cloth does contain finer yarn, due allowance should be made for the custom of the trade as to the numbering and testing of yarn. It is extremely difficult to spin yarn either of perfectly even thickness or to the exact number intended, and it is believed that it is the practice, when part of an order turns out coarser, to make up the right "number" by spinning the rest finer than the number ordered. So long as the buyer gets the right weight and the right number of yards to his bundle, &c., a variation of one or two numbers each way within the denomination is not much regarded. Weavers, who deal with raw yarn, usually wrap seven as a "skein," that is to say, a whole hank at a time, and take the average. In Custom-house testing, where the yarn must first be unravelled from the piece, this cannot be done; but a reasonable allowance for variations of a number or two each way should, in the opinion of His Honor the President in Council, be made before it is held that goods are intentionally made of yarn of a higher number than 30s.

4. As to the levy of penalties, the President in Council agrees in the view that the Collector has not to decide upon the intention of the person wrongly describing the goods, and that the imposition of the penalties allowed by the law cannot be confined to cases in which fraud is established. It is necessary, for the protection of the revenue,

that the Collector should be free to inflict a penalty in any case in which a misdescription is not accounted for to his satisfaction. But, on the other hand, penalties should not be imposed indiscriminately, in every case of misdescription. A wide discretion is left to the Collector by Section 167, Clause 37, of the Sea Customs Act, and in ordinary cases of misdescription it will suffice simply to levy duty upon the goods.

5. Besides the varying circumstances of particular cases, there are certain considerations, such as the general scope and intention of the exemption, and the custom of the trade, which should influence the Collector in deciding whether or not to impose penalties. If goods declared to contain no yarn finer than 30s. are substantially such as the law intended to exempt, it would be harsh to levy any penalty, merely because they contain, through accident or carelessness, a little finer yarn. In such a case, the explanation that the declaration was made on the strength of a manufacturer's certificate, and that the admixture of finer yarn was accidental, should, in the absence of any special circumstances telling the other way, be accepted; and the President in Council is not prepared to say that the discovery of even more than 2 per cent. of finer yarn in such goods would necessitate a penalty. On the other hand, if the goods so declared are found to be made wholly of yarn finer by even one number than 30s, or of finer yarn so blended with exempted numbers as to affect their general character, nothing short of the clearest demonstration that the declaration was *bonâ fide* should avert confiscation and fine.

6. Having regard to the somewhat indefinite nature of the allowance to be made, in accordance with the custom

of the trade before mentioned, the President in Council has no doubt that many cases must arise in which, though it may not be "shown to the satisfaction of the Collector that the goods contain no yarn of a higher than 30s," and duty must, therefore, be levied, it would not be right to impose any penalty for misdescription.

7. The President in Council finds it difficult to suppose that the irregularity most prominently discussed in these papers, namely, the presence, in patches, of a certain quantity of yarn unmistakeably finer than 30s can be intentional. If the object were to economise cotton by the use of size, the finer yarn would be more systematically blended, so as to lessen the chance of the fraud being discovered; and, doubtless, in Calcutta, as elsewhere, purchasers look much to smoothness of surface and evenness of texture. Patchy goods bring the maker's name into disrepute, and fetch so much less than those of uniform make and texture as to more than counterbalance any possible gain from additional sizing. They probably cost less to make, and meet a demand among classes who cannot afford to pay for a better article: but it is improbable that they are deliberately manufactured in order to profit by the exemption; and, when it is found that their irregularity subjects them to duty, their character will be altered, or they will no longer be imported. In this connection I am to say, with reference to your letter No. 1100T., dated 9th instant, that the cloth of the best makers is, naturally, most free from flaws, but, so long as there are good and bad workmen, and good and bad management, patchy goods will doubtless be manufactured.

8. It has been ascertained that these principles have been applied in the Bombay Custom House, and that no

complaints have arisen there of the administration of the law. The penal clauses of the Act have been applied in only one or two cases, when small fines have been imposed as a check upon want of due care in making declarations.

9. As regards the second ground of complaint recited in paragraph 2, the practice at Bombay differs from that at Calcutta, in that it is the exception, and not the rule, to allow any part of a consignment to leave the Custom House before the necessary tests have been applied. The President in Council does not wish to lay down any hard-and-fast rule on the subject, but he considers that, as far as possible, the same procedure should be followed at Calcutta. In Bombay, consignments are generally passed within two days of the presentation of documents, and importers are usually willing to wait that time for delivery. Under this procedure, if the regular test discloses any admixture of fine yarn, all further enquiries and tests necessary to determine the exact nature of the consignment are made before any of the goods are set free; and importers have the opportunity of showing that the presence of dutiable yarn is accidental, or results from wrong packing or marking, or is limited to certain bales or certain pieces only. In such cases it might not always be necessary to examine all the bales of a consignment, or to levy duty on a whole consignment, merely because one bale contains finer yarn than 30s; for, if a sufficient number of other bales were examined, all of which were found correct, so that a *primâ facie* probability was established that the mistake was limited to a small number of bales only, it would be proper to allow the importers the option of either having the remaining bales tested, or paying duty on a portion of the entire consignment proportionate to the ratio borne by

the one dutiable bale discovered to the whole number of bales tested.

10. But if it be necessary, for the convenience of the importers, to allow any consignment to be removed from he Custom House before examination, the President in Council considers that it should be (as is implied, though not expressly ordered, in the Resolution of the Government of Bengal) on the distinct understanding that, if the test bales turn out dutiable, duty must be paid, without demur, on the whole consignment to which they belong. Goods which have once left the Custom House should never be brought back for examination. By this procedure any complaint that the "accident of delivery by importers to purchasers determines the amount of the penalty" would be altogether obviated.

11. On the whole case, I am to say, that the President in Council, while agreeing with the Lieutenant-Governor that the procedure of the Customs authorities at Calcutta has not been illegal, regrets that the discretion entrusted to them by the law has not been more judiciously exercised. His Honour has no doubt that if the principles now explained are judiciously and uniformly applied at Calcutta all reasonable complaints of the administration of the law will cease.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

R. B. CHAPMAN,

Secretary to the Government of India.

In continuation of the tabular statement which appeared in last Report, the following figures are given to illustrate the effects of the remission of duties on various classes of grey cotton goods, and the percentage of dutiable and free.

IMPORTS OF DUTIABLE AND FREE GOODS, 1880.

GREY SHIRTINGS.

	Dutiable. Pieces.	Per cent.	Free. Pieces.	Per cent.	Total. Pieces.
January 1880 ...	2,15,668	32·8	4,43,081	67·2	6,58,749
February „ ...	1,76,251	25·8	5,05,722	74·2	6,81,973
March „ ...	1,71,209	19·9	6,91,188	80·1	8,62,397
April „ ...	1,12,985	14·6	6,60,038	85·4	7,73,023
May „ ...	67,639	11·1	5,41,366	88·9	6,09,005
June „ ...	90,428	13·0	6,05,527	87·0	6,95,955
July „ ...	79,708	10·0	7,14,121	90·0	7,93,829
August „ ...	1,11,762	11·3	8,74,433	88·7	9,86,195
September „ ...	91,062	11·4	7,08,362	88·6	7,99,424
October „ ...	78,213	9·9	7,07,412	90·1	7,85,625
November „ ...	1,03,816	12·6	7,21,619	87·4	8,25,435
December „ ...	93,931	9·0	9,55,000	91·0	10,48,931

GREY DHOOTIES.

	Dutiable. Pairs.	Per cent.	Free. Pairs.	Per cent.	Total. Pairs.
January 1880 ...	8,69,274	73·6	3,11,920	26 4	11,81,194
February „ ...	8,26,335	70·6	3,43,314	29·4	11,69,649
March „ ...	10,68,326	60·2	6,39,998	39·8	17,08,324
April „ ...	10,69,433	62·0	6,54,205	38.0	17,23,638
May „ ...	10,33,357	61·6	6,43,947	38·4	16,77.304
June „ ...	14,62,140	68·8	6,62,977	31·2	21,25,117
July „ ...	9,46,105	56·9	7,15,210	43·1	16,61,315

GREY DHOOTIES.—*(Continued.)*

	Dutiable. Pairs.	Per cent.	Free. Pairs.	Per cent.	Total. Pairs.
August 1880 ...	12,00,787	47·5	13,24,451	52 5	25,25,238
September „ ...	9,50,043	49·2	9,80,161	50·8	19,30,204
October „ ...	9,07,153	59·3	6,22,459	40·7	15,29,612
November „ ...	7,86,095	63·5	4,51,795	36·5	12,37,890
December „ ...	10,42,307	60·7	6,73,474	39·3	17,15,781

GREY T. CLOTHS, PRINTERS & SHEETINGS.

	Dutiable. Pieces.	Per cent.	Free. Pieces.	Per cent.	Total. Pieces.
January 1880 ...	10,624	16·9	51,922	83·1	62,546
February „ ...	6,100	13·8	37,951	86·2	44,051
March „ ...	.....	00·0	26,034	100·0	26,034
April „ ...	661	2·2	29,930	97·8	30,591
May „ ...	1,499	6·9	20,010	93·1	21,509
June „ ...	7	00·0	19,599	100·0	19,606
July „ ...	7,156	17·5	34,799	82·5	41,955
August „ ...	15,018	14·4	88,767	85·6	1,03,785
September „ ...	18,950	14·0	1,15,914	86·0	1,34,864
October „ ...	23,005	15·6	1,25,064	84·4	1,48,069
November „ ...	8,790	5·4	1,53,573	94·6	1,62,363
December „ ...	19,273	9·3	1,89,488	90·7	2,08,761

GREY CHUDDERS AND SCARVES.

	Dutiable. Pairs.	Per cent.	Free. Pairs.	Per cent.	Total. Pairs.
January 1880 ...	606	1·3	48,412	98·7	49,018
February „ ...	3	00·0	47,629	100·0	47,632
March „ ...	1,930	9·6	18,220	90·4	20,150
April „ ...	251	2·8	8,918	97·2	9,169
May „ ...	632	10·4	5,550	89·6	6,182
June „ ...	„	0·00	53,197	100·0	53,197
July „ ...	10	0·00	98,693	100·0	98,703
August „ ...	2	00·0	122,658	100·0	122,660
September „ ...	4	00·0	128,808	100·0	128,812

GREY CHUDDERS & SCARVES.—*(Continued.)*

	Dutiable. Pairs.	Per cent.	Free. Pairs.	Per cent.	Total. Pairs.
October 1880 ...	4,201	2·7	151,931	97·3	156,132
November ,, ...	4,807	4·0	116,766	96·0	121,573
December ,, ...	619	·5	121,914	99·5	122,533

GREY MADAPOLLAMS.

	Dutiable. Pieces.	Per cent.	Free. Pieces.	Per cent.	Total. Pieces.
January 1880 ...	124,432	83·2	25,109	16·8	149,541
February ,, ...	75,247	78·7	20,346	21·3	95,593
March ,, ...	105,519	67·3	51,227	32·7	156,746
April ,, ...	84,984	73·8	30,167	26·2	115,151
May ,, ...	36,121	48·1	38,914	51·9	75,035
June ,, ...	60,737	70·2	25,799	29·8	86,536
July ,, ...	31,028	44·4	38,750	55·6	69,778
August ,, ..	48,133	37·8	79,166	62·2	127,299
September,, ...	42,213	30·1	98,296	69·9	140,509
October ,, ...	87,699	56·2	68,264	43·8	155,963
November,, ...	70,005	36,8	120,451	63·2	190,456
December ,, ...	92,844	42·0	128,334	58·0	221,178

OTHER GOODS.

(Except Grey Mulls and Grey Jacconets.)

	Dutiable. Pieces.	Per cent.	Free. Pieces.	Per cent.	Total. Pieces.
January 1880 ...	2,323	10·3	20,209	89·7	22,532
February ,, ..	4,336	15·1	24,471	84·9	28,807
March ,, ...	313	1·5	20,379	98·5	20,692
April ,, ...	1,089	9·9	9,966	90·1	11,055
May ,, ...	3,207	36·7	5,552	63·3	8,759
June ,, ...	377	4·4	8,104	95·6	8,481
July ,, ...	151	1·1	12,959	98·9	13,110
August ,, ...	4,442	18·3	19,822	81·7	24,264
September ,, ...	5,101	17·4	24,115	82·6	29,216
October ,, ...	8,461	16·3	43,374	83·7	51,835
November ,, ...	1,097	4·9	21,437	95·1	22,534
December ,, ...	7	0·0	45,159	100·0	45,166

REGISTRATION FEES.

THIS matter was referred to in the report for the half-year ended 30th April last, but the letter addressed to the Government on the subject is only included in the present issue. It was a scheme proposed to be introduced as a substitute for the import and export duties, being a charge levied with the primary object of covering the cost of statistics of trade and navigation, but slightly enhanced for revenue purposes. The general feeling of members was opposed to it, and hence the action taken by the Committee.

From Chamber to the Government of India.

Calcutta, 18th May 1880.

Regarding the registration-fee scheme in lieu of customs duties, as propounded by the Hon'ble Mr. Hope in his speech in the last Budget debate, the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have been at pains to gather the opinions of members, with the view of addressing the Government before legislative action is taken.

The Committee have now before them written expressions of opinion by nearly every firm engaged in the import and export trades, and they find that an overwhelming majority are decidedly adverse to the proposed scheme, even though the incidence of it were limited permanently to one per cent.

It has nowhere been shown that the substitution of registration-fees for the present import duties would in any way lessen the troubles and worries of the Custom House; and seeing that the principle has been so distinctly laid down, by the Government of India and by the late Government at home, that these import duties are to be entirely abolished on the very earliest convenient opportunity, and that recent legislation on the subject is of itself hastening that end, by making it probable that at no distant date the import duties will die a natural death, the Committee think it will be better to await such a desirable result rather than embark on a new scheme distinctly retrograde in principle, of which the advantages are problematical and the disadvantages manifest. As to exports the opinions are almost unanimous against any levy of a fee, however small.

The Hon'ble Mr. Hope, in giving a resumé of what he conceived would be the arguments against the scheme, observes that we cannot regulate practical questions by the theories of doctrinaires, and he ventures the opinion that 1 per-cent. is inappreciable in all trades not of a purely speculative and unsound character; but the Committee conceive that the objections raised are not the theories of doctrinaires, but the mature opinions of those interested in the trade. When Indian products enter into competition with those of other countries the margin for profit is generally so small, that one or even a half per-cent. would often be sufficient to put an end to a transaction which generally would be completed in one or two days, and could therefore hardly be called speculative. Indeed, the converse holds true; and where a purely speculative transaction was entered into 1 per-cent. would hardly weigh in the scale.

The Committee admit that there are a articles of purely Indian growth which could well bear a registration-fee of even more than one per cent., but on the bulk of the exports the levy of any duty would be a retrogressive measure, attended with injurious influence on the trade in all such articles.

Under these circumstances the Committee of the Chamber are constrained to enter their opposition to the proposed registration scheme.

THE SALT DUTIES.

The Board of Revenue asked the Chamber's opinion as to the causes which led to a large falling off in the demand for sea-borne salt during the past season, and they suggested certain probable reasons as accounting for the diminished trade. The Committee's reply, which was written upon the information then available, is subjoined; but since then another fact bearing upon the disorganisation of the salt trade has been brought to the Committee's notice.

It appears that during the last three months of the past year, owing to certain Railway difficulties, the stock of common salt at the stores of the Sambhur Lake became exhausted. The price of this common salt was 3½ annas per maund, but rather than disappoint his customers the Superintendent of the mines authorised the issue at 3½ annas of salt which was worth and sold usually at 8

to 10 annas per maund. The natural result of selling half-crowns for sixpences followed; there was "an unprecedented demand during the months "of December and January for salt at the mini- "mum rate." So large were the deliveries of this superior salt that the sales from some other mines in the north-west appear to have been affected, and it is possible enough that to this cause may be traced some portion at least of the falling off in our own trade.

From Board of Revenue to Chamber.

Dated the 3rd July 1880.

I am directed to forward herewith a copy of Government order No. $\frac{983}{26}$ S. dated 9th March 1880, regarding the results of the equalization of the Salt duties, and to request that you will be good enough to favor the Board with the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce on the points noticed by Government.

From Government of Bengal to the Board of Revenue, No. 983-26*S. Calcutta, the 9th March* 1880.

I am directed to request that the Board will cause an enquiry to be made into some points connected with the practical results of the recent orders for the equalization of the salt duties. It has been represented to the Government that one effect of these orders has been that sea-borne salt has to a large extent been displaced in the

North-Western Provinces and Behar by indigenous salt from the Sambhur Lake and other Indian sources of supply; and it is desired to ascertain how far this statement is correct, and to what extent a further reduction of the customs duty would enable sea-borne salt to penetrate further inland than it does at present.

2. As the Board are aware, the duty on sea-borne salt up to the end of 1877 was Rs. 3-4 a maund, while the duty in the North-Western Provinces was Rs. 3, the former kind of salt being thus handicapped to the extent of 4 annas a maund. On the 1st January 1878, the rates were reduced to Rs. 3-2 and Rs. 2-12 respectively, and on the 1st August in the same year they were further reduced to Rs. 2-14 and Rs. 2-8. Consequently the difference between the two rates, which was formerly 4 annas, is now 6 annas a maund.

3. This alteration of the rates of duty, combined probably with other causes, speedily led to a great increase in the supply of Indian salt to the districts of Behar and the North-Western Provinces, and to a corresponding falling off in the transport of sea-borne salt for up-country consumption. Detailed figures, which it appears unnecessary to reproduce here, are given in last year's report of the internal trade of Bengal, and in Mr. Halsey's report of the administration of the Inland Customs Department. These results are further confirmed by statements which have been compiled in this office, comparing the imports of sea-borne salt into the North-Western Provinces and Oudh during a period of 15 months before and after August 1878, when the last revision of duty was made.

4. On this part of the question, the facts before Government appear to warrant the conclusion that during

the last two years sea-borne salt has been very largely superseded in Behar, the North-Western Provinces, and Oudh by indigenous salt, and that this is due to the following causes :—

(*a*) The change in the rates of duty, which has been more favourable to indigenous than to sea-borne salt.

(*b*) The organization of a supply of cheap salt from Rajpootana and the Punjab. The salt from the Sambhur Lake was sold on the spot in 1878-79 at an average price of 6 annas 8 pies per maund, and the consignments of this salt to the North-Western Provinces and Oudh rose from 6,29,000 maunds in 1877-78 to 13,43,000 maunds in 1878-79. There was a corresponding increase in the supplies of Sultanpore salt.

(*c*) The cessation of the Madras famine. It is stated that during the famine large numbers of country boats came down from Behar and the North-Western Provinces to Calcutta with cargoes of grain, and that the manjhees, rather than return with empty boats, were glad to take back salt at nominal freights. With the termination of the famine this cheap carriage of salt up-country came to an end.

(*d*) The rise in the price of salt in bond in Calcutta. It appears that the price in 1877-78 was as low as Rs. 40 per 100 maunds; that in 1878-79 it rose to Rs. 80; and that the present rate is Rs. 70 to Rs. 72.

5. The object, however, of the present enquiry is to ascertain how much of the supersession is due to cause (*a*), and how much to causes (*b*), (*c*), (*d*), or to any other causes which may be suggested; and the information before Government affords no means of judging upon this point. In order to ascertain the facts, it would apparently be necessary to consult merchants engaged in the trade. I am accordingly to request that the Board will institute such enquiries as they may consider necessary, and will favour the Lieutenant-Governor with a full expression of their conclusions upon the subject.

6. The next question is what effect the equalization of the duties, or a nearer approximation to equal duties, would have in enabling sea-borne salt to penetrate further inland. From the East Indian Railway tables of rates of freight it appears that, as between places more than 450 miles from Calcutta, 1 anna would take a maund of salt a distance of 100 miles. But it is not to be supposed that a reduction of 6 annas in the duty at Calcutta would enable sea-borne salt to penetrate 600 miles further up the country. Some part at least of the reduction would be absorbed by middlemen and carriers. There is at present some point where the prime cost of sea-borne salt, plus the Calcutta duty, plus the cost of carriage, exactly counterbalances the corresponding charges on indigenous salt. But any transport of sea-borne salt beyond this point would have the double effect of increasing the cost of carriage in the one case and of diminishing it in the other. If the cost of carriage formed a large proportion of the selling price of indigenous salt at the present point of equilibrium, any reduction of distance would materially influence the price. I am directed to request that the

Board will carefully consider the question in all its aspects, and will report what result, in their opinion, a reduction of the duty on sea-borne salt to the extent of 4 annas or 6 annas per maund would have in carrying sea-borne salt to a greater distance up the country.

7. It is perhaps hardly necessary to add that it is not intended by this reference to invite any expression of opinion on the policy of the Government of India in regard to the principle of equalizing the salt duties.

From Chamber to Board of Revenue.

Calcutta, 7th August, 1880.

The Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 791 of the 3rd ultimo, enclosing copy of a letter numbered 983, and dated 9th March, being a communication from the Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

You call the attention of the Committee to a considerable displacement of consumption of sea-borne salt in the Provinces of the North-West and of Behar by the produce of the Sambhur Lake and of other Indian salines; and, after suggesting several possible explanations of this phenomenon, you invite the Committee to state what, in their opinion, is the true cause to which this diminished consumption of sea-borne salt is attributable; and how far a reduction of the duty on sea-borne salt to the extent of 4 annas or 6 annas per maund would tend to increase its sale at distant stations.

In considering this reference, the Committee of the Chamber assume that they may neglect impure salts such

as those from Bombay, the Red Sea, and the Mediterranean; and that they may confine their attention to the produce of the salines of Cheshire and Worcestershire, the very high quality of which enables them to make their way into consumption, though costing more than the rough indigenous article.

Prefacing so much, the Committee would remark—

1. They do not consider that "cause *d*" (the rise in price of salt in bond at Calcutta) has much importance.

On the figures put forward in the Government letter the case stands thus:—

price 1877 in bond Rs. 40; duty Rs. 325; cost to consumer Rs. 365
„ 1880 „ 71 „ 287½ „ „ 358½

so that it is clear that Liverpool salt, instead of being dearer at the point of departure than it was, is actually cheaper.

2. Nor do they attach any weight to "cause *c*." Return freights by country boats may have been cheap during the Madras famine period; but any increase of supply passing into the districts by this channel would seem to have been at the expense of the railways: at all events, the Committee cannot discover, in the figures before them, any extraordinary increase in the total offtake of fine salt during the period in question. On the contrary, the deliveries then were very considerably less than they are now.

3. Under heading "*b*," it is stated that the salt at the Sambhur Lake is procurable at 6 annas 8 pie per maund, and it is suggested that this is cheap. It scarcely appears so to the Committee, but it is certainly a lower price than that at which it is possible to import English salt; and there is no question in the minds of the Committee,

but that causes "*a*" and "*b*" together account for the preference given in the North-West to indigenous salt. It costs less than sea-borne salt at the starting point, and it enjoys a preferential duty to the extent of 6 annas per maund.

The cost of Liverpool salt delivered ex-ship in the Hooghly will of course vary with the fluctuations of the salt trade at home, the course of freights, and the ruling of exchange. The wholesale price here has been over Rs. 100, and it has been under Rs. 40; but the Committee consider that the very lowest price which it would be at all safe to set down as, on an average of years, the cost to the merchant here would be Rs. 65 per 100 maunds.

Accepting this as a basis, the following comparison is possible:—

Liverpool Salt.			Sambhur Salt.	
Per 100 maunds	65·00	ex-ship.	At the Lake ...	41·66
	3·00	landing.	Rail to Agra ...	42·18
	68·00	... Cost at Terminals	...	83·84
	287·50	,, Duty ...	...	250·00
	355·50			333·84
	35	... Freight to Barrh		54
	391	... (299 miles) Barrh (730 miles)		388

Thus, at equal cost, Sambhur salt may be brought 730 miles against 299 miles in the case of Liverpool salt, the point of meeting on equal terms being about Barrh, the junction for Durbhunga and the Tirhoot district.

The reason of this is found wholly in the differential duty.

For instance, remove the duty, or, what comes to the same thing, equalise it, and the comparison will stand thus:—

Liverpool Salt.		Sambhur Salt.	
Per 100 maunds	65·00 ex-ship.	At the Lake	... 41·66
	3·00 landing.	Rail to Agra	... 42·18
	68·00		83·84
	52 ... Freight to Mirzapore		... 38
	120 ... (509 miles) Mirzapore (520 miles)		122

sea-borne salt would then be brought into the midst of the Benares district beyond the first junction with the Oudh and Rohilcund line, and close to Allahabad. Nor can it be doubted but that, having got so far, the pure English article would push its competitor further back, at least as far as Cawnpore, and take possession of Central India.

It is of course somewhat difficult to forecast the increase in consumption of fine salt which would follow on a removal of the disability under which it now labours; but, seeing that during the two years since an additional protection of 2 annas has been given to native salt, the indigenous article has succeeded in displacing the imported article in the North-West to the extent of over 5,000 tons per annum, it appears probable that, were the full 6 annas excess duty on English removed, and the two salts allowed to find their level without favour, the purer descriptions would gain customers for some 15,000 tons yearly more than it now can claim.

It is obvious that the "handicap" on sea-borne salt may be removed in any one of three ways, that is to say—

the duties may be equalised by establishing a uniform rate of Rs. 2-11-0,

or

the duty on indigenous salt may be raised to Rs. 2-14-0,

or

the duty on Liverpool salt may be reduced to Rs. 2-8-0.

The last is clearly the alternative most consonant with the principles of political economy, and is largely recommended by the success which has hitherto attended the experiments made by the Government of India in the direction of a reduction of the salt duties.

The Finance Minister in his statement of February 1880 showed that, under diminished imposts, the total consumption of salt in India had risen from 20,373,000 maunds in 1877-78 to 22,776,000 maunds in 1879-80, being an increase of about 12 per cent., and that the salt revenue had bettered by over one million sterling.

If we take the figures for Liverpool salt alone, we find that under the old Rs. 3-4 duty, the yearly consumption averaged some 6,320,532 maunds, on which the duty would amount to Rs. 20,541,729, whereas the deliveries during the 12 months ending 31st July 1880, under a Rs. 2-14 duty, have been 7,286,354 maunds, paying to Government a revenue of Rs. 20,941,268.

And this remarkable increase has taken place in spite of the fact now prominently before us, namely, the artificial beating back of our trade from the great consuming districts of the North-West and of Behar.

If therefore, in spite of such disadvantages, a reduction in duty from Rs. 3-4 to Rs. 2-14 has enabled sea-borne salt to increase sales by fully 12 per cent, it seems reasonable to assume that a further reduction of duty to Rs. 2-8 would add another 12 per cent. to the present consumption of lower Bengal, raising this to 81,60,716 mds. per annum

But this reduction of duty would also give us free access to the Upper Provinces, and we have before estimated that this should mean an increased sale of Liverpool salt of 15,000 tons yearly ... 4,09,050

so that a reduced duty might increase deliveries of fine salt to ... 85,69,766 mds. per annum.

yielding a duty of Rs. 2,14,24,415.

It is of course obvious that a portion of this gain to the Government of Bengal might be at the expense of the revenues of the North-West Provinces. On the other hand, however, it might be that the stream of Northern salt, arrested in its downward flow by the upward current from Liverpool, would be turned into other channels, and suffer little diminution in quantity.

Looking, indeed, to the multifarious purposes which salt serves in countries where it is untaxed, its uses in the arts, its importance in manufactures not less than in very humble industries, its value in agriculture, and its necessity as an ingredient in the food of man and beast, the Committee can scarcely question the soundness of the policy of equalising duties by reduction of the higher.

They are, however, painfully conscious that the time is not opportune for experiments in the remission of taxation, and they hold that it would be nothing short of a

calamity were Government to find itself compelled to introduce an income tax, or even were it to continue for one day longer than might otherwise be neccessary the present unpopular license tax, because of a miscalculation in the probable yield of a reduced salt tax,—a duty which causes neither friction nor active discontent, however prejudical to the general interests of the country it may very possible hereafter be shown to have been.

On the whole, the Committee of the Chamber would recommend the tentative adoption of the alternative first mentioned, namely, a simultaneous increase of the duty on indigenous salt, and a reduction of the duty on sea-borne salt, establishing one uniform rate of Rs. 2-11 per maund.

There will thus be no danger of loss to the revenue, and little of salt being made dearer for the people; whilst all qualities will be placed on a fair basis and penetrate the country, not capriciously under artificial provisions, but subject to the ordinary laws of trade, and each upon its own merits.

THE PETROLEUM BILL.

It was represented to the Committee that severe restrictions were being put on the new trade in Kerosine oils in this port, and it was deemed advisable to address the authorities on the subject, as well as on the several sections of the proposed bill in its practical working, with a view to remove the said restrictions prior to the passing of a new enactment. The result of this

correspondence has been the removal of the restriction on the cargoes referred to; and it is trusted that the new law will contain such provisions as will meet the approval of all interested.

From Chamber to the Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 2nd July 1880.

The report of the Committee appointed for the purpose of considering the question of regulating the transport and storage of Petroleum oil was forwarded to the Government of India with your letter No. 901 of the 15th November last, and the Lieutenant-Governor strongly urged that a Bill for regulating its importation, custody, and transport should be introduced, at an early date, into the Council of His Excellency the Governor-General, His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor concurring generally in the outlines of the legislation submitted in the report.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have been anxiously waiting for the publication of the Bill recommended by Sir Steuart Bayley, but no action appears to have been yet taken by the Supreme Government, and as delay in this respect is materially affecting the interests of those who are engaged in this branch of the trade of Calcutta, the Committee trust the Lieutenant-Governor will excuse their importunity in pressing upon His Honor the expediency of a renewed reference to the Government of India.

The present law, Act III. of 1865, it is claimed, places in the hands of the Police a power and authority which the Committee believe could not have been in-

tended when the Act was passed ; and consignees of Kerosine oil in vessels lately arrived are complaining of the undue restrictions that have been needlessly interfering with their business by keeping a large amount of valuable property out of the market.

In support of this representation the Committee submit the following instance, which has been brought to their notice by members of the Chamber, who write as follows :—

" We, and another firm here, recently imported two cargoes of Borthwick's Day-light Kerosine oil by the ships " Mysore" and " Eblana," total 100,000 cases= 1,000,000 gallons. This oil is certified in New York as 100° flash, or 120° burning or fire test : on arrival here, the oil was sampled by the Police on a Sunday morning, without the knowledge of the importers, and tested by the Chemical Examiner to Government as 98° to 93° flash. This examination virtually prohibited the oil being landed in the town, and the Police, acting under their regulations, could only permit its being stored in the suburbs.

" On a careful examination the Chemical Analyst to Government admitted that his test was liable to vary and was " very unreliable." Other chemists were called, *viz*, Dr. D. Waldie and Professor A. Pedler, Chemical Analyst to the Municipality, both gentlemen eminent in their profession. Whole cases were taken from the ships by two Inspectors of Police, and it was proved beyond doubt, after much trouble, that the oil was over 100° flash, and 128° burning or fire test. This fact the Chemical Analyst to Government certified to. The oils

examined by Abel's close test were found to be 103° and 102° Fahr.

"In the *interim*, two large ships have been unnecessarily delayed in their discharge nearly a fortnight; doubt was thrown on the marketable quality of the oil; great hardship has been suffered and heavy loss occasioned; all of which was avoidable. In fact, grave injustice is being done under the present law which fixes the Parliamentary flashing test at 100° Fahr., and a new trade is being impeded and hampered. As before remarked, an efficacious remedy should be at once applied."

The Committee submit that the foregoing remarks will satisfy the Lieutenant-Governor that it is essentially necessary to modify the arrangements under which certificates are at present granted.

The report of the Petroleum Oil Committee recommends that the test to be employed in determining the flashing point of Petroleum should be that known as *Abel's close test*, which has been authoritatively pronounced as the only perfect method that can be adopted: and until that system is introduced and supersedes the present confessedly imperfect and unsatisfactory process, the Committee of the Chamber are of opinion that measures should be taken to free the oil trade, as far as possible, from the restrictions to which it is now exposed.

The Committee append hereto copy of a letter addressed by the Chemical Examiner to Government to the Deputy Commissioner of Police, which shows the absolute necessity for placing the existing system of testing on a different footing. Dr. Warden admits the unreliable nature of the *open test* for determining the flashing

point of Kerosine oils, and as results differing from his own have been obtained by other equally competent persons he frankly accepts their joint conclusions in perference to those arrived at by himself.

The Committee therefore submit that, until the law imposes the standard test to which all Petroleum oil shall be subjected, the chemical analysis shall be conducted jointly by Dr. Warden, Dr. Waldie, and Professor Pedler; that their report shall be accepted as finally determining the quality of the oils submitted for examination; and that the Deputy Commissioner of Police shall be guided by the certificates granted by them.

If the Committee's suggestion recommends itself to the judgment of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, they trust early orders will be issued.

To the Deputy Commissioner of Police,—No. 49 C. Calcutta, Medical College, the 22nd June 1880.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. $\frac{2057}{21-6-80}$, and beg to state in reply as follows:—

1. After the submission of my reports 43*a* and 44*a* on the Kerosine oils ex *Mysore* and *Eblana*, Messrs. Kettlewell, Bullen and Co., and Messrs. Edmands Brothers and Co., informed me that they had submitted samples of their oils to Dr. Waldie and to Mr. Pedler, and that they had obtained results differing from mine.

2. Knowing that the "open test" was unreliable in its indications, I addressed the following demi-official to Messrs. Kettlewell, Bullen and Co.:—

D.O. No. 47C.

Regarding the Kerosine oil imported by you ex *Mysore* and *Eblana*, I have the following suggestion to make :—

Knowing as I do the unreliable nature of the "open test" for determining the flashing point of Kerosine oils, and bearing in mind that results differing from mine, on the flashing point, have been obtained by Messrs. Waldie and Pedler, gentlemen as competent as I am, to examine oil, I am willing to meet them at the Medical College any day between 10 A.M. and 4 P.M., when we can respectively test the oil, following carefully the directions laid down in the Petroleum Act. Should their results still differ from mine, I will, provided the Deputy Commissioner of Police offers no objection, alter my original certificate.

I would recommend your showing this letter to Mr. Lambert, and obtaining his written sanction before communicating with Messrs. Waldie and Pedler.

(Sd.) C. J. H. WARDEN,
Chemical Examiner to Government.

To MESSRS. KETTLEWELL, BULLEN & Co.

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3. On Saturday, the 19th current, Mr. J. Murray, of Messrs. Kettlewell, Bullen and Co., and Mr. Lindstedt, of Ralli Brothers, together with Dr. Waldie and Mr. Pedler, met me at the Medical College Laboratory. The following table shows the results we respectively obtained :—

	Mysore.	*Eblana.*	*Viscount.*
Waldie	105°	...	109°
Pedler	101°	117°	105°-107°
Warden	100°-93°	96°	98°

4. We examined the oils under apparently precisely similar conditions, yet our results were discordant; and this was the more noticeable in the case of the *Viscount* and *Mysore* oils, which you state in your letter to be one and the same oil as they were drawn from the same tanks. Baboo Kany Lall Dey also examined a sample of the *Mysore* oil, and obtained 91° Faht, as the flashing point.

5. In the invoice certificates the *Mysore* and *Eblana* oils were, I believe, certified to flash at 100° Faht, and *Viscount* at 103° Faht.

6. Before granting the certificates, I asked Mr. Murray if he had obtained your sanction; he replied that you had offered no objection to the course which I had suggested in my letter to his firm.

7. The Petroleum Committee in their report to Government remarked that the "open test" was unreliable, and they recommended in its stead Abel's close test. Their report was accepted, and legislation passed on the subject.

8. With a test which was avowedly unreliable, I adopted the only procedure which appeared to me fair to the mercantile firms concerned: I asked for a consultation with the two chemists who had examined the oils, and who had obtained different results.

9. At Mr. Edmands' request, a sample of the *Eblana* oil was examined by Abel's test, when it flashed at 103°, 102°, and 103° Faht. A certificate was given to that effect, which elicited your letter No. $\frac{2002}{15-6-80}$, asking me to examine samples.*

* The *Mysore* oil was also examined by the close test with the following results:—103° and 102° Faht. on the flashing point.

10. In conclusion, I accepted Messrs. Waldie's and Pedler's results in preference to my own figures, and I would accept their joint results, under similar circumstances, in the case of an avowedly defective method of analysis again without the least hesitation.

I have, &c.,
(Sd.) C. J. H. WARDEN,
Chemical Examiner to Government.

No. 2125.

Copy forwarded to Messrs. Edmands Brothers & Co., for information.

(Sd.) J. LAMBERT,
Deputy Commissioner of Police.

CALCUTTA :
29th June 1880.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.
No. 670. *Calcutta, the* 26*th July* 1880.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant received on the 12th idem, submitting copy of a Report of Dr. Warden, the Chemical Examiner to Government, on the oils imported in the ships "Mysore," "Eblana" and "Viscount," and requesting that the Government of India may be pressed to take legislative action with the view of modifying the arrangements under which certificates to land oil are at present granted. The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce request that, until the law prescribes the standard test to which all Petroleum oil shall be subjected, the chemical analysis may be conducted jointly by Dr. Warden, Dr. Waldie, and Mr. Pedler, their joint report being accepted as final.

2. In reply, I am to invite the attention of the Chamber of Commerce to the proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Government of India, dated the 9th instant, published in the *Gazette of India* of the 17th idem, proposing legislation on the subject, and to say that the present correspondence, showing the necessity of immediate legislation, will be submitted to the Government of India.

3. With regard to the results obtained by Dr. Warden at his examination by Abel's close test, I am to say that he explains that the oils from the ships "Eblana" and "Mysore" were found by him to flash actually at 75° and 76° respectively. The certificate that the flashing points were 102° and 103° was granted by him after adding 27°, the accepted difference between the results obtainable by the close and open tests respectively. It will thus be observed that, though the oils in question have been properly admitted under the existing law of this country, they would be excluded under the proposed law, which would fix 83° by the close, and 110° by the open test, as the lowest limit for second class Petroleum.

4. The confusion in this case has arisen from the employment, in the first instance, of the open test, which is well known to be uncertain. Dr. Warden has now been instructed invariably to proceed according to the close test as prescribed in the English statute 42 and 43, Victoria Cap. 47, with rectification for the difference of 27°; and, as this test is practically liable to no variation, it appears to the Lieutenant-Governor to be unnecessary to lay down any rule for associating other chemists with Dr. Warden in his examination. In order, however, to minimize the risk of error, immediate steps will be taken to

obtain from England a set of the best apparatus procurable.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber,

No. 777. *Calcutta, 19th August* 1880.

I am directed to forward herewith a copy of a letter No. 779, dated the 27th ultimo, from the Government of India in the Legislative Department together with a copy of the bill to regulate the importation, possession, and transport of petroleum and other substances of a like nature, and to request that you will favour the Lieutenant-Governor with an expression of the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce on the provisions of the Bill.

I am to ask that your reply may be submitted not later than 15th September.

Government of India to Government of Bengal.

Dated Simla, 27th July 1880.

I am directed to forward herewith twelve copies of the papers noted on the margin,* and to request that His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor will favor the Government of India with an expression of his opinion, and with the opinions of such officers and other persons as he may think fit to consult, on the provisions of the Bill and on the objections raised in the letter from Messrs. Wallace & Co.

* Bill to regulate the importation, possession, and transport of petroleum and other substances of a like nature.

Statement of objects and reasons of the abovementioned Bill.

Letter from Messrs. Wallace & Co., Bombay, dated 6th March 1880.

2. I am also to request that the Bill and Statement may be published in the *Calcutta Gazette* in English, and in such other languages as His Honor may deem proper, and that the dates of such publication may be communicated in your reply.

3. The reply to this letter should be sent in by the 1st October next.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 4th September 1880.

I am directed to reply to your letter No. 777, dated 19th ultimo, inviting an expression of the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce on the Petroleum Bill, now before a Select Committee of the Legislative Council of the Governor-General of India.

When a Special Committee was appointed in June 1879 to enquire into and report on Petroleum and inflammble oils, the Chamber was invited to depute a representative of their body to serve on that Committee, and accordingly Mr. J. N. Stuart acted on their behalf. That gentleman informs the Chamber that he was outvoted on every point by the other members of the Committee, and that his practical representations had not due attention, especially when he pointed out the injurious effect on the trade in kerosine oil which the recommendations of the Committee would be certain to exercise if made the basis of a new enactment. This Chamber did not therefore endorse or approve of the report of the Special Committee. Subsequently the Committee of the Chamber were called on by merchants engaged in the trade to make a representation to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, and

to ask that legislative measures be taken to place this growing branch of the import trade of India on a sound foundation, as the provisions of Act III. of 1865, in the mode of their application by the Police, as to tests, &c., were pressing unduly, and were the cause of great hardships and heavy loss to all interests concerned.

The trade in kerosine is so new, and is in the hands of so few merchants, that the Committee have hitherto hesitated to express opinions as to what legislative action was necessary to foster it, while at the same time securing general protection to life and property.

During the last few weeks, however, a good deal of information has been placed before them, and upon the data thus derived, which they believe to be reliable, they now instruct me to address you.

Appended hereto will be found letters from firms who are the representatives of the trade in Calcutta, and it will be observed that their views are supported by the opinions expressed by the Chamber of Commerce in Bombay.

The opinion arrived at by the Committee is that the present law (Act III. of 1865) is sufficiently stringent for all practical purposes, excepting perhaps those portions which relate to the limits of quality or test, and in these respects it might be amended. They would deprecate legislation on the lines laid down in the proposed Bill, the provisions of which are felt to be too severe, and many of them to be so impracticable as to probably necessitate their modification at no distant period.

The importance of careful legislation will be obvious when it is remembered that there are now in this port

and in Bombay, (besides the stocks in Madras, Rangoon, &c.,) upwards of 6,000,000 gallons of petroleum landed under the provisions of the present law, a large proportion of which will probably be still in stock on the 1st January next, and will then, if the present Bill become law, be held to be dangerous.

The Committee would ask His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor not to overlook the fact that this oil has hitherto proved itself to be not dangerous.

Touching the provisions of the Bill now before them, I am instructed to remark upon the several sections as follows :—

Owner.—This definition is needless, as the word *owner* does not again appear in the Bill. Besides, as the Committee have already pointed out on a previous occasion, an agent does not possess the authority which would enable him to so represent an owner.

Section I.—No legislation should come into force before ample time has been given for advice at port of shipment, and for arrival and sale of cargoes that may be in or afloat to India : instead of 1st January 1881, the Committee would therefore recommend the 1st May. The Bill should contain the following proviso :—"The provisions of this Act shall not apply to kerosine or other inflammable oils now in or afloat to Indian ports if shipped prior to the date of passing this Act." This proviso is obviously necessary to protect the interests of those merchants who, working in good faith, are now heavily interested in kerosine oil in stock in Indian ports, and must continue to be so interested for several months to come.

Section III.—The Committee, whilst adhering to the subdivision of kerosine oils into three classes, are strongly of opinion that the *flashing* point as fixed by the Bill is much too high, and should be as follows:—

1st class Prof. Abel's Test 93°F. equal to Open Test 120°F.
2nd „ ditto 73°F. ditto 100°F.
3rd „ all oils flashing under 73°F. by Professor Abel's close test.

I am directed to point out, in explanation of this subdivision, that if kerosine oil is classed as in the Bill, and the limit is fixed at 103°F. by Abel's test for *first class oil*, the importations will be very small, as this "water white" or "heart of the oil" can only be produced in limited quantities, and at such a high cost as will practically prevent its importation.

To fix for *second class oil*, or the oil of commerce, a limit of 83°F. by Abel's test would be to destroy the trade in this article. It is proved that oil of this high test is quite as dangerous as oil at 73°F. of the same test. Indeed, the higher the test the greater is the heat developed in a burning lamp in a given time. Dr. Letheby's opinion, given to the Home Government on this point in 1871, is as follows:—

"Such a petroleum *flashing* at 100°F.* is, I am confi-
"dent, perfectly safe for use in lamps, and would, I am
"convinced, satisfy the conditions of trade; but if petro-
"leum of a higher standard, as declared in the Bill, is
"decided on by Parliament, it will seriously affect the
"petroleum trade, and by shutting out the American
"petroleums will give a monopoly to the English parafin
"oils. The result of this will be a burden on the poor

* *Viz., Open test.*

"who are the chief consumers of the oil, *without the* "*slightest advantage in the way of safety.*"

This opinion is, the Committee think, entitled to due consideration, as is also Professor Abel's given to the Home Government, *viz.*:—"There were not, in his judgment, "any well-established grounds for considering that that "*flashing* point (100 degrees)* was not calculated to "afford adequate protection to the public." These are the two highest authorities on the subject.

The Committee think it illogical and unreasonable to fix the limit at 83°F. of Abel's test, and to exclude 82°, or indeed any lower limit down to 73°, which is, from all the evidence obtainable, a "perfectly safe" limit, say—100 flashing point, or 120° of the burning or fire test. This also appears to be the Parliamentary test fixed by the Home Government. This limit, whilst it would admit all the well-known and established brands, would exclude dangerous oils.

Section V.—The limit as to quantity of second class oil, without a license, should, the Committee think, be raised to 100 gallons.

Section VI.—The rules and regulations are too stringent, and go beyond providing adequate protection to life and property.

Sections VII, VIII, IX.—Dangerous petroleum under 73°F. of Abel's test should not be stored in quantity in large towns and cities, the Committee being of opinion that stringent rules in this respect are necessary.

Section X—should be made to apply to dangerous oils only.

Section XIII.—A duly certified duplicate or copy of the test should be given to the importer or dealer, in order that he may have official evidence of the quality of his oil.

Sections XIV, XV, XVI.—In regard to possession, the proviso suggested in remarks on Section I. would be required as a protection to present holders, and these sections should not be enforced till after 1st May 1881, if indeed the date should not be further extended in the case of possessors.

Section XVII.—The extreme penalty of confiscation should be enforced only in cases of proved dishonesty or intended fraud.

The Committee's attention has been directed to the danger of landing oil in native boats, as in the case of the "Chalmette" referred to in the Port Commissioners' latest report. This risk is now from ship to shore only, all oil being landed at the Meteabrooz Ghaut, or on the opposite shore. To obviate all chance of fire, the Committee propose that a watchman from the Port Trust Department be put on each boat, whose duty it shall be to prevent boatmen smoking or using fire or lights under any circumstances, till all the oil is discharged : the cost of such watchmen being borne by the importers.

The Committee earnestly recommend these suggestions and opinions to the consideration of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, in the belief that by their adoption a sound and practicable law on the subject can be framed for all India, and the trade extended without fear of detriment to any interest or to private property.

To H. W. I. Wood, Esq., Secretary, Bengal Chamber of Commerce. Calcutta, 9th August 1880.

We beg to call the attention of the Committee to the Petroleum Bill No. 12 of 1880, now before a Select Committee of the Legislative Council of the Government of India, and which it is feared will shortly become the law on this subject.

We enclose a representation which has been made to us by Messrs. Edmands Brothers on the subject, and which it appears to us is worthy of the Committee's attention.

We also enclose copy of a Resolution passed by a Special Meeting of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce relating to, and condemnatory of, this particular Bill.

There are two points to which we would direct the Committee's attention :—

1*st*.—That as the oil of commerce consists mostly of a quality ranging from 100° flash to 110° or 73° to 83° of Abel's close test, the bill, if it become law, must seriously restrict, if it does not destroy, this new branch of the import trade.

The finer oil above 83° A.T. is not, we understand, procurable in quantity.

2*nd*.—That such an exception as the following should be inserted in the bill to prevent heavy loss to holders and shippers who, working in good faith, have supplies in and afloat to India—

"The provisions of this Act shall not apply to kerosine "or other inflammable oils now in or afloat to Indian ports, if shipped prior to the date of passing this Act."

There are, we understand, *upwards of* 390,000 cases of kerosine oil in this port, mostly of the second and third classes, and there is no doubt a large stock in Bombay also. If the Petroleum Bill is passed in its present state, it will cause ruinously heavy losses to holders and to all interested. It is incredible that so stringent and sweeping a law should be placed before a Select Committee of the Legislative Council without being submitted to the Chambers of Commerce of Bengal and Bombay for their opinion and remarks, and without a clause of the nature we have indicated being included in it to protect traders already heavily interested in this trade.

We are,

Dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

KETTLEWELL, BULLÆN & Co.

MESSRS. KETTLEWELL, BULLEN & Co.,

Calcutta, 5th August 1880.

We wish to call your attention to the provisions of the new Petroleum Bill, a copy of which appears in the last *Gazette of India*, 24th July, in hopes that you will induce the Chamber of Commerce to consider it, and make a strong representation to the Government of the absurdity of several of the sections, and of the great injustice and pecuniary loss which will result to the owners of kerosine on and after 1st January 1881.

We think you will join with us in objecting to the following sections:—

Section (1.)—New legislation should only apply to new imports, as the present stock of oil, and that on the way, was imported and shipped in good faith, at an increased cost to meet the requirements of the present law, and there is likely to be over 20 lakhs of gallons in Calcutta alone on 1st January 1881, of dangerous petroleum, for which no license can be granted *(See* (7) (*c*)).

(3.) The fixture of the standard of second class oil 10° above that legalized in England will greatly increase the cost and curtail consumption amongst the natives, while 83° oil is as dangerous as 73°, as either only becomes dangerous in case of a general conflagration.

Section (5.)—The restriction of holding only 40 gallons of second class oil will work greatly to the detriment of the retail trade, if every shopkeeper is exposed to the annoyance of taking out a *license*, and it is impossible to carry on business if their stock is only allowed to be 4 cases.

(7.) *b. & c.*—Every one knows perfectly well the purpose for which 99 per cent. of all kerosine is used in this country, *i.e.*, for burning, so that the absurdity of clause (*c*) is at once seen, and the power granted to the Local Government thereunder.

(8.)—Forbids any one from buying even one tin or 5 gallons, and doubtless every large boarding-house in Calcutta contains now, at least, 100 gallons.

(10) (*c.*)—This will necessitate the labels on the tins being stamped in America, and as the tests differ so much, or the mode of testing in the two countries, that it will be very difficult to induce the packers to do this, as no other country in the world demands it.

(13.)—A duplicate copy of the test should also be provided to the importer or dealer, that he may have the same evidence.

(17.) If this bill is passed as it stands, 2 lakhs cases kerosine may be confiscated on 1st January next, which must be destroyed where it is stored, as the Government can neither keep, *possess*, nor transport dangerous petroleum, nor even destroy it under (7) (c), as other petroleum, other than dangerous, can also be destroyed.

Without touching on the "square," we must express our astonishment at such a Bill as this emanating from such a high official.

Yours faithfully,

EDMANDS BROTHERS & Co.

THE PETROLEUM BILL.

At the Special General Meeting of the Chamber to be held on the 3rd of August 1880, the following Resolution will be proposed by G. A. KITTRIDGE, Esq., and seconded by H. A. RICHARDSON, Esq. :—

"That hitherto Municipal rules have proved sufficient to guard against any dangers, real or supposed, in the case of kerosine oil.

"That in the opinion of this Chamber nothing has been brought forward to call into operation even the provisions of Section 37 of Act XII. of 1875, and that, until that provision has been proved to be ineffectual, no further legislation is needed.

"That the Bill introduced into the Legislative Council of India, called the Petroleum Bill, must, if made law, seriously restrict, if it does not entirely check, this important and rapidly growing trade.

"That the Government of India be respectfully requested to postpone further consideration of the proposed Bill until good cause be shown for the necessity of restrictive measures.

"That the Committee of the Chamber be requested to represent these views to His Lordship the Governor-General in Council."

J. GORDON,
Secretary.

[*Carried unanimously.*]

MESSRS. KETTLEWELL, BULLEN & Co.,

Calcutta, 21st August 1880.

We should esteem it a favor if your Mr. O'Keefe as a member of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce would urge upon the other members the necessity of protesting, in common with the Bombay Chamber, against the Petroleum Bill as introduced into the Governor-General's Council.

It would have been as well if the Chamber's representative on the Petroleum Committee, having been outvoted on every point, had refrained from signing the report, but the mistake may be rectified now by prompt reference to the Government of the trade's objections to the Bill.

Section 1st—which stipulates that the Act shall come on 1st January 1881, is so manifestly unjust to those who have kerosine in stock or afloat, that we think it is only necessary to bring it to the notice of Government to have an extension of time allowed.

Section 3rd.—It has yet to be satisfactorily proved that kerosine flashing at 73° by *Abel's test* (*100° by* Parliamentary test and 118° by American test) is not sufficiently high for the safety of the public. Until last year scarcely a single case of oil flashing *above* 100° (Parliamentary test) had been imported into Calcutta from America; the bulk of the imports flashed at 94° Parliamentary test, (110° to 112° American test). Merchants had no intention of importing oil that was considered dangerous, but the reason of such oil being imported lay in the ignorance that prevailed, both among the importers and the police, as to what was considered dangerous oil under Act No. III. of 1865 of the Bengal Council. Merchants in good faith, as we ourselves did on the arrival of a cargo, presented the American certificate, showing a flashing (or rather burning) point of 112.° This was on each occasion accepted by the police, and no further interference took place. As soon, however, as it was discovered (in March and April 1879) that the American test was not the same as the Calcutta test, (though the Act specifies no particular style of testing) an improvement in the quality of oil imported took place; from that date no ships have left America for Calcutta with oil flashing below 100° Parliamentary test. We are strongly of opinion, therefore, that the terms of the present Bengal Act would, if applied to all Indian ports, be sufficient to prevent the importation of oil under *100°* Parliamentary

test. The only alteration to be made being the substitution of Abel's test at 73° for Parliamentary test at 100.° The Act at the present moment, except on this last point, seems to be working most satisfactorily.

That the standard now fixed upon is too high for ordinary lighting purposes, while at the same time 100° (Parliamentary test) is sufficiently high for safety, was the opinion held by the late Dr. Letheby, who was considered one of the first authorities on mineral oils in England, and whose opinion was taken by the English Government, when the Petroleum Bill was before Parliament, for he wrote in 1871—"Such a petroleum" (flashing at 100°) "is, I am confident, perfectly safe for use in lamps, and would satisfy the conditions of trade; but if petroleum of a higher standard, as declared in the Bill, is decided on by Parliament, it will seriously affect the petroleum trade, and by shutting out the American petroleums will give a monopoly to the English parafin oils. The result of this will be a burden on the poor, who are chief consumers of the oil without the slightest advantage in the way of safety."

We believe that not a single instance can be cited of any serious accident having happened with oil flashing above 73°.

The establishment of such a high test as 83° will cripple, if it does not destroy, a rapidly increasing trade and lay a hardship on both merchants and consumers.

The fear which is entertained by so many persons who are unacquainted with the article arises from a belief that kerosine can take fire spontaneously, that opinion being actually given by the Advocate-General last year,

when a legal point connected with the Act was refered to him. For what we know, the introducers of the Bill may be subject to the same delusion.

Section 5—is absurdly stringent, and sufficient to ruin any trade. Oil that is considered safe enough to be imported should be perfectly free in transport and storage.

Section 10—practically gives a premium to dishonest dealers. We think there would be no harm in marking cases which contain oil flashing below 73°; but to make a difference between two classes of oil, which are both allowed to be imported, say flashing at 83° and 84° is, in our opinion, beyond the province of the Government.

Yours faithfully,

BALMER, LAWRIE & CO.

From Bombay Chamber to Chamber.

Bombay, 16th August 1880.

I am desired to forward for the information of your Chamber 6 printed copies of the letter addressed by this Chamber to the Government of India on the 14th instant, regarding the Petroleum Bill, together with the proceedings of the General Meeting of the Chamber on the 3rd instant which are attached thereto.

From Chamber to Government of India.

Bombay, 14th August 1880.

I am directed to inform you that at a Special General Meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, held on 3rd

instant, the following Resolution, of which due notice had been given to members, regarding the Petroleum Bill, which is now before the Legislative Council of the Governor-General, was carried unanimously, namely:—

"That hitherto Municipal rules have proved sufficient to guard against any dangers, real or supposed, in the case of kerosine oil.

"That in the opinion of this Chamber nothing has been brought forward to call into operation even the provisions of Section 37 of Act XII. of 1875, and that, until that provision has been proved to be ineffectual, no further legislation is needed.

"That the Bill introduced into the Legislative Council of India, called the Petroleum Bill, must, if made law, seriously restrict, if it does not entirely check, this important and rapidly growing trade.

"That the Government of India be respectfully requested to postpone further consideration of the proposed Bill until good cause be shown for the necessity of restrictive measures.

"That the Committee of the Chamber be requested to represent these views to his Lordship the Governor-General in Council."

In forwarding this Resolution for the consideration of the Government of India, the Committee of the Chamber desire me respectfully to invite the attention of Government to the proceedings of the Chamber which are attached hereto, and with great deference to urge that, if Government are unwilling to withdraw the Bill, the further consideration of it may at least be postponed

until the Council returns to Calcutta; when it may be possible to send a deputation from Bombay to confer with the Select Committee on the subject.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
J. GORDON,
Secretary.

From Chamber to Bombay Chamber.

Calcutta, 9th September 1880.

I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 16th of last month, forwarding copy of a letter, dated the 14th ultimo, addressed by your Chamber to the Government of India relative to the Petroleum Bill, and attaching thereto the proceedings of your Chamber, held on the 3rd August, in connection with that proposed legislation.

I am directed by my Committee to thank you for your communication, and to furnish you with a copy of their own letter to the Government of India on the same subject.

From Bombay Chamber to Chamber.

Bombay, 15th September 1880.

I am directed by the Committee of this Chamber to thank you for your letter of the 9th instant, enclosing a copy of the letter dated the 4th instant, addressed by

your Chamber to the Govenrment of Bengal on the subject of the Petroleum Bill.

The Committee at the same time desire me to add that a Special Committee has been appointed by this Chamber to consider the provisions of the Bill, and that the Report of your Chamber thereon will be submitted to the special committee.

From Chamber to Madras Chamber.

Calcutta, 9th September 1880.

You have probably received from the Bombay Chamber copy of their letter to the Government of India relative to the Petroleum Bill, and of the proceedings of their Special General Meeting, held on the 3rd of last month, in connection with the proposed legislation : and I am instructed to furnish you with a copy of this Chamber's letter to the Government of India on the same subject.

FACTORY LABOR BILL.

A circular having been forwarded by the Government of Bengal to the agents and secretaries of all the Companies engaged in the manufacturing industry of the province, it was deemed advisable to hold a meeting of the representatives of all the mills, in order to discuss the Factory bill in all its bearings and to draw up an united protest against its provisions. The

meeting was held, and the result was that this Chamber's letters of the 22nd February 1879 and 18th March 1880 to the Government were endorsed in every particular. The united protest sent into Government of Bengal is appended.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 14th July 1880.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt, on the 29th ultimo, of your letter No. 13 of the 23rd idem, relative to the amended Factory Labor Bill No. 2.

The Committee having already expressed their opinions of the proposed measure to the Government of India in the Legislative Department, in a letter dated the 18th March last, and as they are unable to add any remarks to that representation, I am directed to forward a copy of that communication for submission to the Lieutenant-Governor, and which the Committee request His Honor will be pleased to accept by way of reply to your reference under acknowledgment.

To the Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 29th July 1880.

We have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Mis : Cir : No. 13 of the 23rd ultimo, forwarding copy of a Bill No. II to regulate labor in Factories, with copy of the report of the Select Committee thereon, and requesting an expression of opinion on the said Bill.

We, the Agents, Managers and Secretaries of several Companies, having Mills and Factories in Bengal, and now engaged in the Jute and Cotton industries in this province, have given the said Bill our most careful consideration.

With this reply to your circular, we beg to hand copies of the letters sent to the Government of Bengal by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, dated 22nd February 1879, and to the Government of India, dated 18th March last, the former objecting to Bill No. I, and the latter condemning the compulsory character of the Bill No. II. We cordially approve the aforesaid letters in every particular, and hereby respectfully protest against any legislation on this subject, as alike uncalled for and unnecessary. We are unanimously of opinion that if legislative action is taken, in accordance with the Bill under examination, the jute and cotton manufacturing industries, now struggling for existence, owing to various causes, will be much trammelled and harassed, and many of them may be ruined. We record the following objections :—

Secs. 3 & 4.—Inspection of factories.—We are convinced that the interference of Inspectors and their assistants and subordinates will demoralize labor and lead to many vexatious difficulties. Inspectors are given too much power by the Bill.

Secs. 5 & 6.—We append hereto opinions of medical practitioners, showing how unreliable the test of age is. We are certain that however skilful the certifying surgeon in any district may be he will not be able to give a reliable certificate of age. Sec. 5 must, we are agreed, cause a serious hindrance to mill work. New boys come

into work weekly, and if they have no certificate, or cannot obtain one from any cause, many of them will lose employment. Sec. 6 will prove impracticable in its operation in the absence of a "birth record." Few, if any, native children have such a record. It has been held by medical men that there are no physical indications by which the age of a native child can be determined. The age may vary as much as two years under certain conditions.

Sec. 16., 1st & 2nd clauses must of necessity prove impracticable. No manager of a factory could swear to, or prove, the age of a child without great and vexatious trouble, loss of time, and perhaps stoppage of his factory for one or more days. No two surgeons are likely to agree as to the ages of native children. The effect of the 2nd clause may prove to be that one mill is allowed to go on whilst another is put to the most harassing trials in regard to ages of children, who are, perhaps, expert spinners and weavers, and earning good wages. We see no reason to unsettle this arrangement.

Lastly.—The Select Committee who reported on the Bill (No. II) do not in any single instance appear to be gentlemen who employ factory labor, or who have had any practical experience on the subject. Hence it appears to have arisen the very partial approval of the Bill (No. II) in its present form. The report of the Select Committee leaves the above objections unsettled.

In recording our protest against the Bill to regulate labor in factories, we would respectfully suggest to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, if indeed any Bill is necessary (which we emphatically deny), to appoint a Select Committee of gentlemen engaged in the jute

and cotton industries in Bengal in co-operation with such officials as Government may approve, and from their report and recommendations to frame an act which will be alike fair in all its terms and conditions to the employer and employed. This the Bill (No. II) utterly fails to do in our opinion.

We have the honor to be,

SIR,

Your obedient servants,

APCAR & Co., *Seebpore Jute Manufacturing Coy., Ld.*
BARRY & Co., *Gourepore Company, Ld.*
ERNSTHAUSEN & OESTERLEY, *Howrah Mills Coy., Ld.*
FINLAY, MUIR & Co., *Champdany Jute Coy., Ld.*
MACNEILL & Co., *Ganges Jute Mills Coy., Ld.*
KETTLEWELL, BULLEN & Co., *Fort Gloster Jute Mills Co., Ld.*
pp. HOARE, MILLER & Co., F. E. PATTESON, *Serajgunge Jute Coy., Ld.*
MACKINNON, MACKENZIE & Co., *India Jute Coy., Ld.*
SCHOENE, KILBURN & Co., *Samnuggur Jute Factory Co., Ld.*
GEO. HENDERSON & Co., *Barnagore Jute Factory Co., Ld.*
BIRKMYRE BROTHERS, *Hastings Jute Works.*
RUSHTON BROTHERS, *Asiatic Jute Coy., Ld.*
A. R. MCINTOSH, *Liquidator, Calcutta Jute Mills Co., Ld.*
ANDREW YULE & Co., *Budge Budge Jute Mills Coy., Ld.*
KETTLEWELL, BULLEN & Co., *Bowreah Cotton Mills Co., Ld.*
S. H. ROBINSON, *Goosery Cotton Mill Coy., Ld.*
SCHOENE, KILBURN & Co., *Dunbar Cotton Mills Co., Ld.*
MACKINNON, MACKENZIE & Co., *Garden Reach Cotton Mill Association.*
ANDREW YULE & Co., *Bengal Mills Coy., Ld.*

TRADE-MARKS BILL.

The Committee have been asked by the Government of Bengal to express their opinion on the Indian Trade-Marks Bill (No. II), and it will be gathered from the annexed correspondence that the views they held last year as to the absence of any necessity for legislation, and as to the objectionable character of several material provisions of the proposed Bill, have not been modified by further consideration.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber,—

No. 1643. *Dated Calcutta, 29th March* 1880.

I am directed to forward herewith a copy of a Bill (No. II) to provide for the registration of trade-marks, together with a copy of the Report of the Select Committee thereon, and to request that you will be so good as to favor the Lieutenant-Governor with an expression of the opinion of the Chamber on the provisions of the Bill.

2. I am to ask that your reply may reach this office by the 15th June next.

From Chamber to the Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 30th June 1880.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 19th instant, asking for an early expression of opinion in regard to the Bill (No. II.) to provide for the registra-

tion of trade-marks, forwarded by you on 29th March, accompanied by a copy of the report thereon by a Select Committee of the Legislative Council.

The Committee have again, for some time past, had under consideration the subject of this Bill, and they have invited the general body of members of the Chamber to express their opinions in regard to it. The result is that the Committee see no reason to change the views they expressed in their letter to the Government of Bengal, dated 22nd August 1879, *viz.*, that if the bill can be made to apply exclusively to Indian manufactures it will meet with their approval, but in its present form, and intended as it is to apply also to imported goods of European manufacture, it must have their strenuous opposition.

It would appear that the Bombay Chamber of Commerce do not now take this view of the question, as they advocate the extension of the Bill so as to include all trade-marks of goods wherever manufactured; this, however, appears to be a distinct departure from the original and unobjectionable intention, *viz.*, that there should be legislation only and entirely for the protection of the cotton spinning and manufacturing industries of Bombay.

From those engaged in trade in the Bengal Presidency no remonstrances on account of the want of such an Act have ever come, and, no difficulties having arisen from its absence, no desire has been expressed for legislation. The Committee therefore respectfully submit that it will be unusual and unfair to make the provisions of such Act extend to Bengal. Their opinion is that it will be time enough to make the extension when the want becomes

felt, and when those whose interests the Government have in view express a desire for protection.

The Government is naturally anxious to carry out the wishes of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce and of the Mill Owners' Association; and, such being the case, the Committee would submit that the proposed bill might be made to apply to that Presidency only; this would meet the wishes of those who have asked for legislation and who consider legislation necessary or desirable.

In regard to the proposal made in their letter of 22nd August 1879, to restrict the Act entirely to trade-marks used in connection with Indian products, the Committee admit that there may be difficulties (such as have been pointed out by the Special Committee), but these difficulties, or possible hardships to the Manchester manufacturer from his not being able to register his marks in India, could be provided for by an admission that registration in England is to be equivalent to registration here, in which case detection would soon follow any attempt (as has been suggested in the example given) to appropriate marks already registered in England; and, moreover, the Committee think it improbable that any home manufacturer could be injured by his marks being used on any cloths made in this country.

The Special Committee have also pointed out that, in event of registration in England giving the right to register here, a manufacturer who desired to appropriate a mark in use in this country but not registered, might get it registered in England, than have it registered here, and thereby get a presumptive, and thereafter, under certain circumstances, an absolute title to it as against the

true owners ; but the Committee submit that the case is one which would rarely, if ever, occur in practice, and need hardly, therefore, affect the question.

Again, I am desired to point out—what appears to have been overlooked—that a work such as is proposed could never be performed by a Registrar having no technical knowledge of the subject ; that he must, as in England, be assisted by a committee of experts, and that at home this has been found to entail an amount of labor which was never contemplated, and that even if such necessary experience and technical knowledge exist in this country, it would be practically impossible to find men possessing them who could afford the time necessary for such work.

The Committee do not see why, registration of trade-marks in England being accepted by law as equivalent to registration here, it could not be arranged to give the manufacturer of Indian products power to register his marks in England and, under the English Act, which would do away with all necessity for special legislation in this country.

The Committee do not know whether it might not be possible, as another alternative, to have a Registration Office in India for the exclusive registering of trade-marks for Indian products, that office being provided with photographed or other duplicates of all marks registered at home, so as to admit of such marks only being registered here as do not happen to be registered at home.

In conclusion, and referring to the foregoing, the Committee desire me to say :—

(1)—That they object to the proposed *Bill*, on the grounds that registration is not required in this Presi-

dency, and that even a permissive Act would cause great and unnecessary inconvenience.

(2)—The Act might be made local, applicable only to the Bombay Presidency.

(3)—In event of the Government determining to legislate for the whole of India, it would be desirable either to make registration in England equivalent to registration here, or to provide that all registrations be made at home.

REGISTRATION OF PARTNERSHIPS.

With regard to this important subject, the Committee are endeavouring to draft a Bill which, whilst entailing no hardships on the native community, will give those trading with native firms the security they ought to possess.

The Committee feel that the subject is surrounded with great difficulties, and that the utmost care will have to be taken in drafting the Bill, but they trust these are not insurmountable.

Recent cases in court have shown how very desirable such registration is. Every one who has had to bring an action against a Native firm is aware of the extreme difficulty of ascertaining who are really partners, and of the facility with which in the present state of the law men can conceal their connection with any firm.

From Chamber to the Government of India.

Calcutta, 19th June 1880.

With reference to this Chamber's letter of the 23rd March 1867, your answer of the 31st July 1867, my reply of the 16th September 1867, and your acknowledgment of the 4th October 1867, I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce again to address you on the subject of the registration of Native Partnerships.

In the last of the letters above referred to, His Excellency the Governor-General in Council was pleased to state that the subject would be considered in the Legislative Department, but the Committee regret that since that date no such legislation as that proposed has taken place.

The subject is such a pressing one, and of such vital importance to the commercial community, that the Committee of the Chamber are compelled once more to bring it before the Government, although at the same time they feel it to be unnecessary to go into the question at any length, this having been done in the correspondence above referred to, and in the more recent letter addressed by the Bombay Chamber of Commerce on the same subject. The question is, moreover, thoroughly understood by Government, as was shown in their letter of 31st July 1867; and the Committee are confident that they have only to urge on His Excellency the Governor-General in Council the importance of passing some enactment for compelling such registration of partnerships as will enable the commercial community to have confidence (not at present possible) in dealings with

Native firms, to ensure at once that the matter will again be taken into consideration in the Legislative Department.

Cases are constantly occurring, where, according to the best information obtainable, a man is supposed to be a partner in a Native firm, but when that firm becomes insolvent he escapes from responsibility by denying a partnership which cannot be proved; and, in like manner, a Native when sued and his goods attached puts forward some one else as being in partnership with him, which person thereupon can claim the goods so attached as the property of the partnership.

The following cases and a published judgment of the Small Cause Court fully illustrate the difficulties merchants have to contend against, and how helpless they are in the absence of any legal protection of the character for which the Committee now apply.

Ram Churn Dass and Surbosook Dass Rs. 3,111-12-0
Dhumsook Dass, Sookdeb Dass „ 1,250-6-6

These dealers failed about the beginning of September 1877, and when the plaintiffs came to institute action against them, it was found that the same partners were trading under different names. A decree was obtained against the defendants in the Small Cause Court on separate causes of action for the whole of the above amount, with the exception of a promissory note of Rs. 1,728-12-0, which was beyond the jurisdiction of the Court.

The plaintiffs thereupon took out warrants against the men and tried to arrest them, but could not succeed in

doing so, as they remained in concealment for some time, only coming out on Sundays and holidays, when they could not be arrested, and, finally, they fled to Rajpootana, after remaining some time at Chandernagore. One or more of the men are at present in concealment in Calcutta or its neighbourhood, but it is believed outside the limits of Calcutta, and therefore beyond the jurisdiction of the Small Cause Court, and are endeavouring to make arrangements to re-commence business as soon as the Statute of Limitation enables them to do so. The men are well known to possess money and property of considerable value, but the same being situated in the Native State of Rajpootana, it is practically beyond reach of a warrant of any Court.

Nashmul Choonilall.—Failed 24th October 1877. The liabilities of the firm were about 1¼ lakh of rupees, and on the evening before their failure, they took delivery from several firms. They fled to Rajpootana, and, up to date, their creditors have not realized anything from them.

Sewbux Bungshe Dhur.—Failed about the end of April of the current year. Liabilities about 1 lac. Up to the evening before they suspended they took delivery of considerable quantities of goods, and on the following morning, when the failure became known, there was not a single piece of goods or an article of furniture remaining in their shop or godown. The parties have, it is said, fled to Rajpootana.

(Before J. V. Woodman, Esq.

NOGENDRONATH DUTT AND ANOTHER

vs.

ULLMANN, HIRRSCHORN AND COMPANY.

This was an interpleader claim for Rs. 125.

Mr. Woodman.—In this case the plaintiffs interplead for certain goods which have been seized by the defendants in execution of a decree obtained by them against one Netto Gopal Dutt. From the evidence, it appears there was a joint ancestral family business carried on by one Haradhone Dutt and Netto Gopal Dutt in partnership, under the name of Haradhone Dutt, and that on the death of Haradhone, his two sons, the present plaintiffs, inherited his share in the business, which *was still* carried on in the name of Haradhone. The evidence also shows that, with regard to one of them at any rate, *viz.*, Nogendro, he, as well as Netto Gopal, took an active part in carrying on the business. The goods seized, consisting of candles, are goods which the firm was in the habit of purchasing, and in which they dealt; they are seized in the shop where the business is carried on, and I have no doubt whatever, they were goods purchased in the course of the joint business and out of the funds of that business.

For the defendants it is contended that they are not partners, because of the absence of any express agreement to combine. I don't think an express agreement necessary. As I have said, two of them at least took an active part in the management; they all lived on the profits of the business, and they would have had to live on less if there had been losses; the rent of the shop was paid in the name of Haradhone Dutt, and the license was taken out in that name. So that certainly some agreement to

carry on business together in that name may be implied, and something more than a mere combination of property or co-ownership may be said to exist. Then it is said that these persons, the plaintiffs, are in the position of representatives of a deceased partner who had left money in the firm, or children of a deceased partner receiving a portion of the profits by way of annuity, and are therefore, in the former case, under Section 241 of the Contract Act, and in the latter under Section 243, not partners; but the facts of this case go further than the circumtances to which those sections apply; for here, so far from merely leaving money in the firm, or merely being in receipt of a share of the profits, they are actually assisting in carrying it on. Being partners, what has happened is this: that, in execution of a decree against one partner, partnership property has been seized, and as this Court has power only to sell the actual goods and chattels belonging to the judgment-debtor, and not any right, title, or interest in them which he may have, I have no alternative but to release the goods. My sympathies are entirely with the defendants, but until some law is passed making compulsory the registration of the names of those who are partners in native business firms, there will always be cases in which execution creditors will be sufferers from being unable to join as defendants all the partners of a firm, and in all such cases this Court can give them no relief if they seize the partnership property. In no possible view of this case could I hold that these goods are the sole and exclusive property of their judgment-debtor, and, therefore, it follows, I could not order them to be sold. I think the property seized ought to be released.

The Committee understand that the main difficulty which the Government has hitherto experienced in framing any measure to meet the case has been that of defining what a partnership really is, and, consequently, to prevent the hardship which would ensue were persons entering into partnerships for special ventures obliged to register such co-partnercy. But this is a difficulty which, in the opinion of the Committee, can be overcome: for the line, they submit, could without much difficulty be drawn between temporary partnerships and those of a recognised and more or less durable nature existing amongst native firms having publicly known places of business.

The Committee trust that His Excellency the Governor-General in Council will be pleased to give this very important subject the consideration which, they respectfully submit, it demands.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.—

No. 3588. *Dated Calcutta, the 29th July* 1880.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No.——, dated the 19th June last, to the address of the Government of India in the Legislative Department, on the subject of providing by legislation for the compulsory registration of Native Partnerships.

2. In reply, I am to state for the information of the Chamber of Commerce, that the Government of India are anxious to give their best consideration to any practical suggestions that may be made for effecting the proposed registration, and at the same time avoiding interference with the Indian custom whereby members of native firms often belong to undivided families.

3. I am at the same time to forward the accompanying copy of a letter No. 2099, dated the 3rd November 1879, to the address of the Government of Bombay, which conveys the views of His Excellency the Governor-General in Council in the matter.

From Government of India to Government of Bombay, No. 2099, dated Simla, the 3rd November 1879.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 5376, dated the 6th September last, forwarding copy of a letter, with its accompaniments, from the Chairman and Secretary of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce on the subject of a proposed legislative enactment to provide for the compulsory registration of partnerships.

2. In reply, I am to say that the Governor-General in Council has little doubt, but that the difficulty described by the Bombay Chamber of Commerce is a real one; and the question for consideration is, whether it is practicable to remove or remedy it by legislation in the direction indicated. The objections which have appeared to the Government of India to exist to such legislation have been fully set forth in the previous correspondence ending with the letter from this office No. 2583, dated 13th October 1874. Since then a large body of representative native merchants have signified their concurrence in the recommendation of the Chamber, and the Bombay Government have given their support to the measure proposed in the enclosures of your present letter. If, as appears to be the case, the Bombay Chamber of Commerce and their legal advisers consider it practicable to frame an enactment which, while avoiding the

objections which have been taken by the Government of India, would nevertheless tend to effect the desired object, the most convenient course would perhaps be to invite the Chamber of Commerce to prepare and submit, through the Government of Bombay, for the consideration of the Governor-General in Council, a draft of such a measure as they would wish to see enacted. If the Bombay Government see no objection to this course His Excellency in Council authorises its adoption.

3. In framing this draft it will be necessary clearly to distinguish between transitory and standing partnerships and to avoid the difficulties arising from the existence, in the case of native mercantile and banking firms, of members belonging to undivided families. His Excellency in Council is further of opinion that the scope of the Bill should, in the first instance, be limited to the Presidency towns, and that in this view it should provide that no firm having its sole or principal place of business in a Presidency town, and not being registered, should be allowed to sue third parties, and no member of such a firm should be allowed to sue his co-partners on the original side of the High Court, or in the local Court of Small Causes.

4. I am to add, that the Governor-General in Council cannot give any pledge that a draft bill, if submitted, will be accepted by the Government of India, but His Excellency in Council will be prepared to give his careful consideration thereto, and will endeavour, so far as may be practicable, to give effect to the wishes of the mercantile community of Bombay, as expressed through the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, in the matter, so far as they may be supported by the Bombay Government.

From Chamber to Bombay Chamber.

Calcutta, 6th September 1880.

The Committee of this Chamber recently addressed the Government of India on the subject of the compulsory registration of partnerships, and since then they have observed with much interest the proceedings of your Chamber in regard to the same subject.

By your kindness the Committee have received a copy of your Solicitors draft bill and of the correspondence relating to it, but it is with much regret that they find you had given up all idea of legislation, there being apparently so many practical difficulties in the way of it.

The compulsory registration of partnerships is, as can be judged by the frequency with which the subject has been revived in both Chambers, of considerable importance to the mercantile community; and perhaps the want of such an Act is felt here even more than in your city: and it therefore appears to the Committee that, before ceasing to urge the attention of Government to the subject, it would be desirable to discuss the difficulties, and see whether they cannot be overcome.

The Committee had intended to ask the Chamber's Solicitors to prepare a draft bill, but learning that Messrs. Craigie, Lynch, and Owen had done this on your behalf, it seemed best to request you to let us consider theirs.

They accordingly placed it before their Solicitors, Messrs. Sanderson & Co., who have given it their fullest attention, and made some suggestions which your Committee will perhaps kindly consider, in consultation with

the framers of the draft bill, in order to see whether something cannot be made of them.

Messrs. Sanderson & Co. agree with Messrs. Craigie, Lynch, and Owen in thinking that there are no legal difficulties in the way of legislation, and they also concur in the opinion that there is no real foundation for the objection as regards compulsory registration of the names of partners, members of a joint Hindoo family, causing a substantial modification of the law regarding undivided Hindoo families;—at least Government should be asked to point out in what respect the law would be modified or altered.

As regards the clauses of the draft bill as it stands, it would be desirable to make the "local extent" apply to the Presidency towns and a radius of 10 miles round them; many large native dealers in this Presidency having their places of business some distance out of the township.

Our Solicitors suggest that under Part VI: the penalty for non-registration of partnership should be made severe, irrespective of the disqualification in regard to instituting proceedings in Courts of law; but it is not improbable that Government might object to this, and that was probably what your advisers had in view when omitting it.

The chief practical difficulty which your Solicitors contemplate in the working of such an act seems to be the necessity of registration extending to every trading partnership in the Presidency towns, from that of the most eminent firms down to that of the smallest Native dealers. It has occurred to Messrs. Sanderson & Co., in

regard to this, that advantage might be taken of the various License Acts in defining the classes to be registered, there being no necessity to register the partnership of petty Native dealers in the bazars, such small transactions as this class have being for cash. Supposing the trading firms coming under classes 1, 2, 3 were registered, all licensed below class 3 being exempted, one of the practical difficulties would be overcome.

Although the License Acts may be repealed at some future date, a system of registration would have been established in the meantime, and the Licensing Officer might be utilized for the purpose of defining the persons to be registered, in the same way as he does now define under what classes they are to be licensed.

Perhaps your Committee will kindly consider these observations; and awaiting the favour of a reply.

From Bombay Chamber to Chamber.

Bombay, 15th September 1880.

I am directed by the Committee of this Chamber to acknowledge, with their thanks, the receipt of your letter of the .6th instant on the subject of an Act for the compulsory registration of partnerships.

In reply, they desire me to say that the points raised by your Solicitors had not been overlooked by them when the subject was being considered. If, however, your Solitors are able to so modify or alter the draft bill as to satisfactorily overcome the practical working difficulties which we encountered, the Committee will be prepared to give it careful consideration.

From Chamber to Bombay Chamber.

Calcutta, 22nd September 1880.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, relative to registration of partnerships.

In their letter to your address, dated the 10th February last, Messrs. Craigie, Lynch, and Owen say there are many "practical working difficulties" in the way of the proposed legislation, but it was not their purpose to enumerate them; and you also refer to the practical difficulties encountered while considering the question.

The Committee of this Chamber are not at all inclined to under-estimate the circumstances which have led to the temporary abandonment of the scheme advocated by your Chamber, nor are they at the moment prepared to place before you any suggestions beyond those submitted in my letter of the 6th instant.

They will be glad, however, to give their most careful attention to the practical difficulties to which your Committee and Messrs. Craigie, Lynch, and Owen refer if you will be so good as to set them forth.

From the Bombay Chamber to Chamber.

Bombay, 2nd October 1880.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22nd ultimo, relative to an Act for the compulsory registration of Partnerships.

In reply, I am desired to state that the practical difficulties to which our Solicitors referred surrounded the

entire working of the Act as proposed. Both in respect of its application and incidence and of its limited character the feeling at the last General Meeting of this Chamber, when the question was discussed, unmistakeably condemned such legislation. In so far as the difficulties were local, it is not probable that your Chamber can assist us in overcoming them, and in so far as they are general or may be peculiar to Calcutta or any other locality, your Chamber are in a position as good as if not a better one than ourselves to set them forth.

Another reason which induced this Chamber to abandon the scheme for the present was that as there was a registration of partnerships Bill under consideration at home, it was better to defer further action here until the result of the English proposed measure was known.

From Chamber to Bombay Chamber.

Calcutta, 9th October 1880.

I have my Committee's instructions to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant in the matter of compulsory registration of partnerships.

The Committee attach so much importance to the employment of every expedient to accomplish the object which they have in view that they purpose to refer the subject again to their Solicitors after the vacation, and if it is decided to frame a Bill for the consideration of Government it will be obviously necessary to repeat much of what is contained in that drafted by your Solicitors; and I am directed to ask if you have any objection to our adopting the latter to such extent as may be found expedient.

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From Bombay Chamber to Chamber.

Bombay, 23rd October 1880.

I have submitted your letter of the 9th instant on the subject of an Act for the compulsory registration of partnerships to the Committee of this Chamber, who desire me to say, in reply, that they have no objection to your adopting the draft bill prepared by their Solicitors to such extent as may be found expedient. It must, however, be understood that the sense of the Chamber as shewn at the General Meeting on the 3rd August last, when the question was discussed, was distinctly adverse to our continuing to follow up the matter either directly or indirectly.

EXECUTION IN NATIVE STATES OF DECREES BY BRITISH COURTS.

The Committee in taking up this question are fully aware of the difficulties which may be suggested in legislating for the relief of those who hold decrees by British Courts, but are unable to execute them against debtors who abscond to native states, or against property possessed by them within native territories. The seriousness of the evil is, however, one which is continually being brought to the notice of merchants by the ease with which dishonest traders and bankrupts evade the decrees obtained against them by absconding to native states, and a premium is thus offered to fraud which calls for legislation.

The following letter shows the views expressed by the Chamber in bringing the subject before the Government, and they await such action as may afford the relief asked for.

From Chamber to the Government of India.

Calcutta, 26th June 1880.

With reference to the enforcement of decrees of civil tribunals obtained by British subjects in British India against debtors who abscond to native states, His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General was pleased to pass a Resolution, dated 27th August 1868, to the effect that holders of such decrees must present them themselves, or by their lawfully constituted agents, for execution before tribunals in native states, without in any way invoking the aid or relying on the influence of the British representative,—the question of reciprocity in the execution of decrees being one left to be decided by the tribunals of the respective Governments; and that where there are no regular tribunals, the political representative would, as a general rule, abstain from putting any pressure on, or using his influence with, the Chief or the Durbar in order to the execution of a decree obtained in British territory.

His Excellency considered that this determination ought not to inflict any real hardship on claimants who have resorted successfully to our Courts for redress, as in many cases where large sums of money are claimed from debtors resident in British territory, such persons, if they abscond into native states, leave either property or partners

behind them in the said British territory, against whom execution may at once be taken out; and it was further stated that in all cases where plaintiffs apprehend that a defaulting debtor may abscond or may carry away his property, the provisions of Act VIII. of 1859 (now the Civil Procedure Code) regarding the attachment of property while a suit is pending, afford to all litigants, who are properly alive to their rights and position during litigation, a fair and adequate security against eventual loss by evasion or default.

The Governor-General in Council further observed that there might occur flagrant cases in which a defaulting and absconding debtor possesses large means within the limits of native teritorries in which the default and evasion may be marked by acts of gross fraud and flagrant dishonesty, and in which by deceit or artifice he may have reduced the honest trader to ruin, or have left him without the slightest prospect of redress, and there might be other peculiar circumstances which, in the judgment of the Political Officer, might render interposition on his part expedient.

Upon this important subject I have been directed by the Committee of the Chamber to address the Government again, in consequence of the great difficulties experienced and the heavy losses continually sustained by the merchants of Calcutta by reason of native traders being able to evade the law by absconding to native states in which the warrants of British Courts do not run. It was not considered expedient to address the Government on this subject until it was ascertained whether the resolutions above referred to effected the end desired, but the Committee regret to say that merchants, however careful

they may be as regards giving credit, are constantly large and heavy losers by debtors absconding.

On that part of the Resolution which alludes to debtors from whom large sums are claimed, and who abscond, leaving either property or partners behind them in British territory, against whom execution may at once be taken out, I am to observe that the Committee recognise no difficulty as regards such debtors, the experience of the Chamber being that such cases are extremely rare, as one partner has no occasion to abscond if he leaves property or a solvent firm behind him.

With reference to the statement that in cases where plaintiffs apprehend that a defaulting partner may abscond or may convey away his property, all litigants, who are properly alive to their rights and positions, are afforded fair and adequate security by the Civil Procedure Code, the Committee would remark that it is the very difficulty of discovering that debtors are about to abscond, or are conveying away their property, that renders the provisions of the Code almost inoperative. The applicant has first of all to satisfy the judge, on affidavit and by the evidence of witnesses, that the debtor has absconded, or is about to abscond, or that he has disposed of, or removed from the jurisdiction of the Court, his property, or any part, with intent to avoid or delay the plaintiff, or to avoid any process of the Court, or to obstruct or delay the execution of any decree that may be passed against him. It has from experience been found almost impossible to satisfy a judge on these points; but assuming that this may have been done, the Court will issue a warrant to arrest the defendant, and bring him before the Court to show cause why he should not give security for his appearance. Be-

fore a warrant can be issued the debtor has got outside Calcutta, and the warrant so far is valueless. The same process has to be followed in order to get an attachment of the property, and, when such order is obtained, it is generally found that the debtor's godowns are empty, and no goods can be traced, they having all been despatched by degrees up-country or elsewhere in such a way as to be untraceable, so that the plaintiff finds himself put to considerable expense, in the first instance, in trying to prevent the debtor absconding, or to prevent his goods being removed; he then has to prosecute his suit, as best he can, for the purpose of getting a decree, and here again he experiences great difficulties owing to the defendant having left no one on whom process can be served, or any premises on which it can be posted; but assuming these difficulties are over, and a decree is obtained, and the whereabouts of the defendant discovered to be in an independent state, in which there is a regular tribunal, the plaintiff, in person or by authorised agents, has, after going to the expense of getting a certified copy of the decree from the High Court, to proceed to the state in which the debtor is residing, and apply afresh for an order to arrest defendant, or attach his goods; and this very application is at once known, and before any order can be obtained for arrest or attachment, the debtor has again absconded or sold or removed his property and goods. In places where there is no regular tribunal the application to the British representative almost as easily becomes known to the debtor, and arrest or attachment of property is rendered impossible.

The Committee of the Chamber feel that the only course by which merchants, who are compelled, in the

ordinary course of their business, to trade with native dealers according to the usual custom, can be protected, is for the Government to legislate in such a way as to make warrants issued for the arrest of absconding debtors to run in the native states as well as in Calcutta; and they apprehend that there would be no difficulty in complying with that request. The warrant might on application of the plaintiff to the Court, and on his satisfying the Court that there is good reason to believe the defendant is going, or has gone, out of the jurisdiction of the High Court, direct the warrant to the Sheriff, authorising him to transmit it to such Court, Judge, or British agent, or representative, as the plaintiff may direct, for execution by such judge or representative, the plaintiff himself, or by his agent, taking the necessary steps to assist in the execution of the warrant; or, in special cases, the Court might have power to make over the warrant to a special officer to be nominated by the Court for execution, which officer could, under instructions from the plaintiff, proceed to the state and arrest the defendant. Difficulties in regard to this may be suggested on account of the want of reciprocity with the native states, but the Committee consider that on the matter being represented to the chiefs of such states they would only be too glad to assist the British Government.

The evil complained of is a most serious one, and the ease and facility with which a debtor can get beyond the reach of his creditors hold out such a premium to dishonest traders and bankrupts that they are taking advantage of it more frequently than formerly. In the month of April last a native dealer was believed to be getting into difficulties; with the view apparently of

making effectual arrangements for his flight, he made certain payments to lull suspicion, and two days afterwards it was found he had gone, and not a package of goods or anything could be found. It would have been impossible in this case to have got evidence to prove that the debtor was about to leave Calcutta for the purpose of avoiding process, or that he was removing his goods, as he had managed to remove them before it was known he was in difficulties.

With these remarks the Committee place the subject before the Governor-General in Council in the confident expectation that it will not fail to receive His Excellency's favorable consideration.

PROPOSED NEW FORM OF BILL OF LADING FOR SAILING VESSELS FROM CALCUTTA TO PORTS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

An amended form of bill of lading having been submitted for the approval of the Chamber by the Special Committee appointed in London, a general meeting was held last June to consider what further action should be taken in the matter. Several members expressed their views, pointing out forcibly wherein certain clauses introduced were objectionable; and it was finally decided to refer the matter to a Committee in London with full powers to settle with shipowners the exact form of the document. As yet no decision appears to have been arrived at.

Proceedings of a Special Meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, held at noon, on Monday, the 21st June 1880.

W. E. CRUM, Esq., *President,* in the chair.

The Chairman commenced the proceedings by saying,—

Gentlemen :—The notice which was sent to you of this meeting, along with the various papers with which you have been furnished, leaves me little to say in regard to the object of our attendance, further than to invite discussion as to what our action should be.

We have had submitted to us an amended form of bill of lading drawn up under legal advice by a Special Committee appointed by merchants and shipowners in London, in consequence of the protest which you signed last year against proposed innovations.

This Committee, as you are aware, consisted of the following gentlemen :—

Mr. John Corry, Mr. J. Blackwood,
„ S. A. Ralli, „ Geo. Duncan,

and we have now, I think, to consider what course we will adopt ; whether to discuss the various clauses of this bill of lading, and express our views upon them ; or to appoint a committee of merchants in London to meet an equal number of shipowners, and give them either full or restricted powers to deal with the matter for us.

I will be glad if any of the gentlemen present will express their views on the subject.

Mr. T. S. Anderson said—Gentlemen :—You will remember that some months ago the London shipowners

tried to introduce a new form of bill of lading for sailing vessels. At that time a few firms here met together to see to what extent our mutual interests were threatened, and we got an elaborate opinion from Messrs. Sanderson & Co. on the various new clauses. This was sent home by this Chamber, accompanied by a protest signed by most of the shippers of this city. We have now before us an amended document drawn up under the advice of Messrs. Freshfields, and from which we are told all objectionable clauses have been expunged.

The clause in this new bill of lading to which the shipowners say they attach most importance is that in which they seek to relieve themselves from liability for any act, neglect, or default whatsoever of pilots, master, or crew in the navigation of the ship in the ordinary course of the voyage. Now, gentlemen, you are probably aware that at a late trial (the "*Zurich*,"—*Bawer & Co. vs. Hutchinson*) it was decided that the clause, "all and every the dangers and accidents of the seas and of navigation of what nature or kind soever" did not free the owner from liability for neglect or default of master or crew. In the House of Lords it was further held, in the case of *Doolan vs. the Midland Railway Company*, that a contract which stipulated for non-liability against damage arising from the negligence of servants would be opposed to reason, and therefore not binding. Now, although this liability is nothing new to shipowners, as Mr. Corry tries to make out (I remember getting counsel's opinion on the point in 1867), and although the risk is as insurable by the shipowner as by the shipper (there used to be, and presumably still are, clubs for the purpose), yet I think we would all willingly

cede this point, provided the House of Lords' decision were altered by some new Act. But if this decision holds any clause such as desired by shipowners is invalid, and I much fear would lead the way to endless litigation. What is there to prevent underwriters refusing to pay up, and referring you back to the shipowner, saying that the contract was illegal, and that no loss had been sustained by you for which you could claim, till you had exhausted your recourse on the ship? At present underwriters pay up and sue the shipowner in the shipper's name, but will they be as ready to do this when they have to start with a contract nullifying the shipper's claim,—illegal though such contract may be?

Regarding the other clauses of the bill of lading, as I said before, we sent home a statement of objections drawn up by Messrs. Sanderson, and the only reply we have to these is that counsel has been consulted and the shipper's rights have been carefully protected. Now, gentlemen, I think we are entitled to something more than this. I think that it would have been only fair for the shipowners to have sent us a copy of the counsel's opinion; and I therefore beg to move that the Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce be requested to write to Mr. Corry for a copy of Messrs. Freshfields' opinion, in order that members of the Chamber may clearly understand what liabilities are affected by the proposed new bill of lading; that the further consideration of the subject be postponed till that opinion be received; and that the old bill of lading be meantime retained as the adopted form of this port.

With your permission I will read a paragraph from Messrs. Sanderson's opinion:—

"The old form of bill of lading exempted the ship "from liability in respect only of distinctly insurable "risks, the occurring of which was easy of proof, and "for such matters as the guaranteeing of the nature of "the weight and contents of closed packages.

"The new form of bill of lading, however, would "practically exempt the ship from claims of any sort, "for although it is not sought by the new exceptions "and conditions to exempt the ship from liability arising "from act of negligence of the master, crew, or pilot of "ships (except where such negligence occurs in the "management and navigation of the ship), and therefore "it would be open to a shipper under the new form of "bill of lading, or his consignee, to claim and recover for "damages where it could be proved that such damage "had been caused by negligent stowage of goods or other "similar neglect; yet it is obvious, from the nature of "things, that the difficulty of proving negligence in the "vast majority of cases would be an insurmountable "obstacle to success in any proceeding under the bill of "lading framed in accordance with the new form."

At the London meeting Mr. Stephen Ralli is reported to have said that the basis of Mr. Matthew's opinion was "that the shipowner will not be relieved of his "obligations, and that the bill of lading with regard to "any matter will not affect the shipper's right to recover."

In the absence of the actual opinion of Mr. Matthew I am of course open to correction, but it seems to me that it must have been that no clause a shipowner can insert in his bill of lading will hold good against common law, but it will shift the onus of proof from the ship-

owners' to the shippers' shoulders. Now this seems to me to be the point at issue, and one to which shippers must on no account agree. The shipper sees nothing of his goods nor of the treatment to which they are subjected from the time they pass into the hands of the shipowner. It is therefore impossible in 99 cases out of 100 to prove neglect or default. On the other hand, the shipowner and his servants are the only people who touch the goods while under bailment to him, and he has every opportunity of proving the absence of neglect and default. The only inference, therefore, is that neglect and default do occur, and that the shipowner is resorting to the new bill of lading as a means of avoiding his legitimate liability, and I think that to all clauses which merely transfer the onus of proof without freeing the shipowner from liability shippers should give their most strenuous opposition.

A great deal was said at the London meeting about the greater strictness of the clauses in the steamer bill of lading, but we all know that these are not enforced. The steamers coming here belong to regular lines, and it is for the owners' interests to keep on good terms with shippers; but sailing vessels come from all parts of the world, and a considerable proportion of them are not regular traders, so that the owners have no self-interest to make them reasonable in allowing claims which are not duly proved.

Mr. J. W. O'Keefe rose to propose an amended resolution and said :—*I*t does not appear to me that we should be taking a correct course by referring the several clauses of the bill of lading to a Solicitor, and perhaps from him to Counsel. I do not see that the matter is one which

admits of any delay. We may have the objectionable bill of lading passed without demur. I think it would be a preferable course to appoint a Committee of Calcutta merchants, with full powers, who would meet an equal number of representatives of the shipping interest, and together discuss and settle each point separately.

In regard to the bill of lading proposed to be adopted I would remark that, generally speaking, I have found the old style of bill of lading to work satisfactorily, both for shipowners and shippers, and, that being so, innovation seems to me likely to be pernicious. I am opposed to the change. Taking the new clauses of the proposed bill of lading separately, my experience is that it is difficult to get a sircar to mark bales, bags, or cases with letters of uniform size at all times. I hold that loss caused by negligence, the act of a mariner, renders the shipowner liable, and he should not be allowed to be free from such liability. "Reasonable wear and tear" also it would be difficult to define, and the insertion of this clause would, I think, lead to litigation; the clause in regard to 'sweat, rust and decay' is, it seems to me, loose and one-sided: "rust" is already provided against by the clause we so frequently see in bills of lading—"not accountable for leakage, breakage, or rust." Why insert this objectionable clause? It appears to me, gentlemen, that we are wasting time on a point where we have great unanimity, and that our best course, as I said before, is to refer the whole subject to Calcutta merchants of experience, of whom there are many resident in London. Holding these views I propose the following amended resolution:—

1*st*.—That the proposed bill of lading in all its clauses be referred to a Committee of six merchants in London representing the Calcutta trade, with full powers to act in the matter and to settle the exact form of bill of lading for ships sailing between Calcutta and any port in the United Kingdom.

Mr. G. H. Morrison said :—I have much pleasure in seconding the resolution proposed by Mr. O'Keefe. It is always prejudicial to business to have an unsettled controversy, and Calcutta merchants may safely leave their interests in the hands of their representatives at home, especially since these representatives will have at command the best legal advice in the world.

As regards the bill of lading submitted by the joint committee of merchants and shipowners, there may be clauses needing modification ; but, upon the whole, the document does not strike me as particularly objectionable from a merchant's point of view. It appears to me that the bill of lading raises questions rather between the underwriter and the shipowner than between ship and shipper. Speaking generally, it occurs to me that the risks which the shipowner repudiates are accepted and taken off the merchant by the subscribers to an ordinary Lloyd's policy. This view is borne out by the statement made by Mr. S. Ralli and Mr. Park at the London meeting. They said that Messrs. Freshfields and Mr. Matthew, the Queen's counsel, had given it as their opinion that the status of the merchant would in no wise be injured by the new bill of lading. "Wherever the marine policy does not protect him, the shipowner is to take him up." Of course it will be the duty of our representatives to satisfy themselves of this ; but

supposing matters are as represented there is little ground left for contention.

No doubt, the clause in the bill of lading on which shipowners lay most stress is that exempting them from the consequences of negligence in navigation on the part of their servants; and Mr. Anderson has urged that the introduction of this clause would encourage litigation, because the shipowner cannot legally contract himself out of liability for acts of his servants, and the insurer would therefore refuse to pay claims and refer the merchant back to the owner. I leave the legal question to the lawyers: but I do not think that underwriters are likely to take up a position which would unsettle confidence in their policies; and certainly I should say that an Insurance Office would find the temptation to litigate stronger under the old bill of lading, which says nothing about the shipowner not being responsible for negligence, than under the proposed bill of lading, which gives notice alike to the merchant and to his insurer that, so far as the shipnowner can, he will resist such claims.

On its own merits, the shipowner's clause will not be thought unreasonable if you reflect that, when an owner has provided a good and seaworthy vessel, has properly manned her, and has carefully chosen for her officers with Board of Trade certificates, he has done all that is possible for the protection of the property committed to him: and if, because some officer neglects the lead or dozes on watch, you are to make his owner responsible, not only for the value of the vessel, but also for her entire cargo, then I think that no prudent man will face risks so enormous, and so much beyond control, for the very narrow returns which even the best-managed ships have

latterly yielded. Please observe that it is not the consequences of carelessness in loading or stowing or discharging from which the shipowner desires relief: these risks remain on him as they ever did. The clause runs:—

"Neglect in the *navigation* of the ship in the ordinary course of the voyage." It is not worded identically with the similar clause in the bill of lading first sent out to us.

Then there is the clause about the countermarks, and it is objected that they cannot always be conveniently made of the same size as the leading marks. Well, perhaps not; but at least the spirit of the request is reasonable. We may confess that the shipowners have made a concession in accepting responsibility for countermarks. No one can say that it would have been impossible for merchants to carry on their trade without getting the countermarks signed for. At some trouble and some expense every merchant might mark his jute with his house-marks so unmistakably as to obviate any need for the ship's officer to take cognisance of the countermarks. However, merchants have carried their point, and shipowners will, in future, take the trouble and expense off their shoulders. As a merchant, I cannot pretend to be sorry; and as an agent, I am glad to be relieved of a discussion which has recurred whenever we have had to draft a charter; but let us admit that the shipowners may fairly ask, in return, that the countermarks shall be large enough to be seen without spectacles!

The remaining clauses are of less moment; there are some things which may seem unnecessary or questionable, but our friends at home can work them all out in committee, and I would once more appeal to you to give full

powers to our representatives, and let us put out of our minds this vexed question of the bill of lading.

Mr. O'Keefe's amended resolution was put to the meeting and carried.

The Chairman informed the meeting that a letter had been received from the Madras Chamber, requesting to be represented at the conference with London shipowners, and nominating Mr. William Macfarlane, of Messrs. H. B. Muir & Co., to act in their behalf. The Committee of the Chamber had already placed Mr. Macfarlane's name on the list of proposed representatives, and this would be communicated to the Madras Chamber; but of course this meeting could not take the responsibility of committing the Madras Chamber to the resolution giving the gentlemen proposed full authority in the matter. This would, however, be put before their Madras friends, who would doubtless communicate their instructions to Mr. Macfarlane, who could easily represent the interests of both Chambers.

The Chairman then moved the following Resolution, which was seconded by *Mr. John Morison*, and carried :—

2*nd*.—That the following gentlemen be invited by the Chamber to arrange between themselves for six of their number to act on the Committee referred to in the first Resolution, namely :—

R. E. Bickerdike, Esq.,	of Messrs.	Morison, Bickerdike & Co.
W. Blackwood, Esq.,	„	Blackwood, Conor & Co.
J. N. Bullen, Esq.,	„	Kettlewell, Bullen & Co.
O. V. Ernsthausen, Esq.,	„	Ernsthausen & Oesterley.
F. W. Heilgers, Esq.,	„	F. W. Heilgers & Co.
W. Macfarlane, Esq.,	„	H. B. Muir & Co.
E. A. Mavrogordato, Esq.	„	Tamvaco & Co.
P. J. Nicolas, Esq.,	„	Kelly & Co.
Stephen Ralli, Esq.,	„	Ralli Brothers.
H. Reinhold, Esq.,	„	Reinhold & Co.

The Chairman was of opinion that the members of the Chamber were under great obligations to Mr. Reinhold for the considerate service he had rendered by furnishing them with a special report of the proceedings of the meeting held in London, on the 21st April, prepared from notes taken by shorthand writers; and he moved a vote of thanks to Mr. Reinhold, which the meeting cordially adopted.

A vote of thanks to the Chair closed the proceedings.

London, April 22nd, 1880.

SIR,—Having been appointed by a public meeting of merchants and shipowners engaged in the Calcutta trade as a Committee to superintend the preparation of a bill of lading for sailing ships homewards, we jointly acknowledge the receipt, in September last, through the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, by Mr. Corry, one of our number, of a protest signed by a large number of merchants in Calcutta against the introduction of the proposed new form of bill of lading, and about the same time the receipt of a very comprehensive examination of the different clauses of the document by Messrs. Sanderson & Co., Government solicitors in Calcutta, which we made it our business fully to consider and to submit to the judgment of our best legal authorities here.

Under the advice of Messrs. Freshfields, the well-known solicitors to the Bank of England, instructed by Mr. Matthew, Q.C., the enclosed form of bill of lading has been prepared, and was yesterday submitted to a meeting at the Cannon-street Hotel, which was called as per accompanying circular.

This meeting did not approve of any definite arrangement being come to without communication with their friends in Calcutta; at the same time it was felt that as the shipowners had no representatives in Calcutta (all the shipowners being resident in this country) a full and fair discussion of the various clauses of the bill of lading could hardly be looked for.

It was therefore unanimously agreed that copies of the proposed new bill of lading should be sent to you as Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce of Bengal, and that you be requested to say if the form suggested is approved by the mercantile community or not, and should it be that it is not approved, that the Chamber of Commerce be requested to appoint some half-dozen gentlemen, members of Calcutta firms here, to meet a similar number of shipowners in London, by whose joint endeavours a form of bill of lading suitable to the growing necessities of the trade may be produced, which will be accepted both by merchants and shipowners.

It is with the view of an early and an amicable arrangement being come to on the basis suggested that we now address you, and we respectfully solicit your best efforts to promote it. It is anticipated that before the expiry of three months we shall have the pleasure of hearing from you.

We are, Sir,

Your most obedient servants,

JOHN CORRY, *Chairman of Meeting.*
S. A. RALLI, *Ralli Brothers.*
J. BLACKWOOD.
GEORGE DUNCAN, *by authority* JOHN CORRY.

TO THE SECRETARY TO THE
BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, *Calcutta.*

From Chamber.—Calcutta, 2nd June 1880.

The President and Committee of this Chamber desire me to acknowledge the receipt of the letter dated the 22nd April last, from yourself and Messrs. S. A. Ralli, J. Blackwood, and George Duncan, as constituting a publicly appointed Committee to superintend the preparation of a Bill of Lading for sailing ships engaged in the Calcutta trade with London and other hôme ports ; and to inform you that the subject of your communication is receiving their careful consideration, and that it will be immediately submitted to the members of the Chamber and others who are interested in the representation you have been pleased to make.

Calcutta, 23rd June 1880.

In continuation of my acknowledgment on the 2nd instant of your letter of 22nd April, I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to inform you that the following Resolutions were adopted at a Special Meeting, held on Monday the 21st instant, to which all the signatories to the protest of last year as well as all members of the Chamber were invited :—

1*st.*—That the proposed Bill of Lading in all its clauses be referred to a Committee of six merchants in London representing the Calcutta Trade, with full powers to act in the matter, and to settle the exact form of Bill of Lading for ships sailing between Calcutta and any port in the United Kingdom.

2*nd.*—That the following gentlemen be invited by the Chamber to arrange between themselves for six of their

number to act on the Committee referred to in the first Resolution, namely :—

R. E. Bickerdike, Esq.,	of Messrs.	Morison, Bickerdike & Co.
W. Blackwood, Esq.	„	Blackwood, Conor & Co.
J. N. Bullen, Esq.	„	Kettlewell, Bullen & Co.
O. V. Ernsthausen, Esq.	„	Ernsthansen and Oesterley.
F. W. Heilgers, Esq.	„	F. W. Heilgers & Co.
W. Macfarlane, Esq.	„	H. B. Muir & Co.
E. A. Mavrogordato, Esq.	„	Tamvaco & Co.
P. J. Nicolas, Esq.	„	Kelly & Co.
Stephen Ralli, Esq.	„	Ralli Brothers.
H. Reinhold, Esq.	„	Reinhold & Co.

The meeting considered it expedient to invite ten gentlemen engaged in the Calcutta Trade in order to anticipate the possibility of any of the six who may have been formally nominated not being able to take a part in the conference; and it is believed no difficulty will arise in forming a Committee of six to represent Calcutta interests, and to promote the important object entrusted to their experience and judgment, and in conjunction with your goodself and the gentlemen who may act with you to arrive at an arrangement which will finally determine the form of Bill of Lading which may be accepted both by shipowners and merchants.

London, 23rd July 1880.

I am directed by Mr. Corry to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd ultimo, giving the names of ten gentlemen from whom six are to be selected between themselves to represent Calcutta interests on the Bill of Lading question, and I am to state to you that Mr. Corry reciprocates the hope that this important question may in a short time be settled.

Calcutta, 28th June 1880.

In continuation of my letter of the 23rd instant, I am directed to inform you that the Madras Chamber of Commerce having expressed a wish to be represented at the Bill of Lading Conference, and that Mr. W. Macfarlane, of Messrs. H. B. Muir & Co., should be recognised as their nominee, I am directed by the Committee of this Chamber to request you will be so good as to accept the Madras Chamber's proposition, and to give all due consideration to any suggestions Mr. Macfarlane may submit.

From Chamber to Madras Chamber.

Calcutta, 16th June 1880.

In acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, I have the pleasure, by direction of my Committee, to hand you a printed copy of the correspondence which has been furnished to the members of this Chamber and others who signed the protest forwarded in August last to the Chairman of the General Shipowners' Society, London.

A special meeting has been convened for Monday the 21st instant, for the purpose of appointing representatives of the Indian trade to meet the London Shipowners at a conference to settle the Bill of Lading question, and my Committee will not fail to submit to the meeting the desire of your Chamber that your local interests should also be represented, and to communicate to you the instructions that may be addressed to the gentlemen who may be nominated.

As I am afraid this letter will scarcely reach you in time for declaring your nominee so as to place his name before the meeting on Monday, I have sent a message by telegraph as at foot.

Please telegraph your proposed representative at the Bill of Lading Conference for submission to meeting here next Monday. Your letter answered.

Calcutta, 24th June 1880.

On the 16th instant I had the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th, and the following day I received your telegram in which you named Mr. William Macfarlane, of Messrs. H. B. Muir & Co., as your representative at the conference with shipowners on the Bill of Lading question.

Previous, however, to the receipt of your message, Mr. Macfarlane's name had already been placed on the list which it was proposed to submit for election.

I have now the pleasure to hand you copy of two Resolutions passed at the special meeting of the Chamber, held on Monday the 21st instant, which will inform you that Mr. Macfarlane was nominated with nine other gentlemen, leaving it to themselves to arrange for any six of their number to act as a Representative Committee. The meeting thought it would be as well to invite the larger number in order to anticipate the possibility of any of the six who may have been formally nominated not being able to take a part in the proceedings.

The meeting did not consider it expedient to issue any definite instructions to the London Committee, or to limit

their authority in their negociations with the shipowners; they therefore gave them full powers to act according to the best of their judgment, confident that the important interests committed to their charge will receive the fullest consideration that can be devoted to them.

Calcutta, 28th June 1880.

In continuation of my letter of the 24th instant, I am instructed to inform you that your request to be represented by Mr. Macfarlane, of Messrs. H. B. Muir & Co., at the Bill of Lading Conference has been communicated to that gentleman as well as to Mr. Corry, Chairman of the Shipowners' Association, and any representations that may be submitted on your behalf will, no doubt, receive the careful consideration of the conference.

I am at the same time directed to say that, with all desire to associate your Chamber with the proceedings of the meeting held here last week, it did not appear to the meeting that they would be justified in committing you to the terms of the Resolution which gave unlimited powers to their representatives in negociating with the London Shipowners, and they were of opinion that it would be better that Mr. Macfarlane should be unfettered in that respect as far as your interests were concerned.

A copy of the proceedings of the meeting will follow in a day or two.

From Chamber to H. Reinhold, Esq., London.

Calcutta, 2nd June 1880.

I have had the pleasure to submit to the Committee of the Chamber your letter of 22nd April on the subject of ships' bills of lading, and I am directed to express the Committee's cordial acknowledgment of the active interest you have taken in the matter, and to thank you for your very obliging communication and the report of the proceedings of the meeting which you considerately took the trouble to secure, by engaging shorthand writers, for the purpose of placing members of the Chamber and other signatories to the protest of August last fully in possession of the discussion that took place, and the opinions expressed by the various speakers on that occasion.

The Committee have received a communication from Mr. Corry and the other gentlemen who were appointed to prepare a form of Bill of Lading, and printed copies of it and of your letter and the transcript from the shorthand notes will be immediately circulated in anticipation of an early meeting, to be held with a view to the appointment of representatives of Calcutta firms resident in London to meet shipowners there in order to arrive at a settlement of the question.

Calcutta, 30th August 1880.

I have had the pleasure to receive and place before the Committee of the Chamber your favors of the 21st and 30th of last month.

The Committee desire me to express their satisfaction at learning that the gentlemen named by you have con-

sented to carry out the object of the special meeting of the Chamber, held on the 21st June, and that you have obligingly accepted the office of Honorary Secretary to the conference.

The Committee are confident that the cordial co-operation of the representatives of this Chamber with the shipowners of London will result in a wise and sufficient settlement of a question which is of so much importance to all interests concerned, and that the material differences which have existed will be speedily displaced by a mutual agreement upon all points at issue.

ASSESSORS OF SHIPPING.

The following correspondence speaks for itself. The list of assessors has not yet been submitted to the Committee. They trust that nothing in the Act will be used to prevent the survey, by two competent ship-masters under special circumstances, of ships which have received damage. Such surveys are acknowledged and admitted by underwriters, the people most interested, and it would be a matter for regret were the available surveyors for such cases limited by local legislation to one or two persons however competent.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber of Commerce,—No. 731, *Calcutta, the* 31*st May* 1880.

I am directed to invite the attention of the Chamber of Commerce to the Indian Merchant Shipping Act of 1880, published in the *Gazette of India* of the 13th March 1880, and, with reference to section 15, to say that a list of assessors for Calcutta is under preparation, and that, if the Chamber desire to propose the inclusion of the name of any particular person in the list, the Lieutenant-Governor will be very glad to be favoured with their suggestions.

2. With regard to the concluding clause of section 69, I am to request that the Chamber will favour the Lieutenant-Governor with the names of any persons who should, in their opinion, be specially exempted by the local Government from the operation of the section.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

14*th June* 1880.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 731 of the 31st May.

With reference to the appointment of assessors under section 15 of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1880, the Committee desire me to say that, as the list under preparation by Government may have already anticipated any nomination they could have suggested, they will be glad if you will favor them with the opportunity of considering the list when completed, and of submitting the names of any competent persons who may have been omitted.

In reply to the second paragraph of your letter relative to the provisions of sections 68 and 69 of the Act as to the qualifications of persons practising as Surveyors of shipping, and to the proviso which exempts from this operation the Surveyors for Lloyds and the Bureau Veritas Registers, the Committee submit for the Lieutenant-Governor's consideration that the Surveyors for the American and German Lloyds and similar Registers of shipping should also be specially exempted, as they believe those persons possess all the necessary qualifications for their profession and that their examination for competency should be dispensed with.

INLAND TELEGRAPH TARIFF.

The following correspondence will inform members of the endeavour made by the Committee to obtain a reduction of the rates charged for inland telegraph messages. Although this has not been successful, the Committee are not without hope that a material modification of the tariff will be sanctioned so soon as the revenue will admit of any surplus being applied to a reduction of the rates now levied.

But the charge of double the ordinary rate for a message containing even one word in excess of the present minimum of six words is so heavy and disproportionate, that the Committee have urged that a reduction to two annas for

each word in excess of the first six should be at once conceded.

From Chamber to the Government of India.

Calcutta, 21st August 1880.

I am instructed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to address you on the subject of the present rates for inland Telegraph messages, which it is believed might be considerably modified to the benefit of the general public throughout India, and if not with advantage at least without loss to the State.

The Committee thoroughly recognise the principle that the Telegraph Department should be self-supporting, and that in no way should expenditure be met other than by the revenue received from those who avail of the benefits it affords for quick communication.

In other countries experience has shown that a lowering of rates and a sliding scale of charge, according to the length of the message, has in no way tended to diminish the net profits of their Telegraph Departments.

It is of course impossible to make a fair comparison between results in England or in various countries of the Continent and India, because the distances to be traversed here are, as a rule, so much greater; but nevertheless there must be a point to which the charges can be lowered so as to increase the revenue in a corresponding degree to the increase in expenditure from extra plant and labour required to meet the increased traffic.

From 1868 to 1872, the rate had been 10 words for one rupee, the address being only partially free. This

rate was said to be unremunerative, and in consequence the present tariff of 6 words for one rupee, and no charge for address, was introduced.

The increase in the number of messages during the former period does not appear to have been so great as might have been expected from the changes introduced, but probably a different result would have been brought about had both the charge and the number of words been reduced simultaneously.

The revenue recovered from private messages shows a gradual improvement year by year, if that of 1877-78 be excepted, this last year's sudden increase being due to the famine in Southern India ; and it would thus appear that the public here, as in England, are inclined to avail more and more of the facilities for quick communication afforded by the use of the telegraph wires, but the Committee believe that the progress would be more rapid and satisfactory if an improvement was made in the existing tariff.

It is admitted that the address being free the Telegraph Department has to transmit gratuitously about double the number of words contained in each message ; and in reference to this it is stated in the Administration Report of 1872-73 that this proportion of unremunerative work is necessarily lessened according as the message increases in length. This the Committee submit is a strong argument in favour of a reduction in charge for words in excess of the regulated number on which the first payment is made, it being clearly to the advantage of the Department to encourage long messages.

I am therefore instructed respectfully to suggest, for the consideration of His Excellency the Governor-General

in Council, some such modification as the following of the present rates :—

Minimum rate for four words ...	...	12 annas.
Every additional word ...	...	1 anna.

Such a change in the tariff would prove a very general benefit, and would sooner or later, the Committee believe, increase the traffic to such an extent as to justify the reduction.

From Government of India to Chamber.—
No. 383 *T. Simla, 5th October* 1880.

In forwarding the accompanying copy of Resolution on the subject of the inland telegraph tariff, I am directed by His Excellency the Governor-General in Council to say that if any facts can be adduced in contravention of those on which the conclusions arrived at by the Government of India in this matter have been based His Excellency will be glad to afford them careful consideration.

2nd.—Though unwilling to increase the burden on the general revenues for the maintenance of the telegraph service, His Excellency would willingly forward any scheme for developing and facilitating communication by telegraph, so long as it could confidently be adopted without risk to the interests of the tax paying community.

RESOLUTION :

Traffic on Inland Telegraph Messages.

Read—

Letter from the Government of Bombay, in the Public Works Department, No. 10T-653., dated 3rd July 1880, to the Government of India.

Letter from the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, No. 178, dated 6th July 1880, to the Director-General of Telegraphs in India.

Letter from the Director-General of Telegraphs in India, No. 453T., dated 27th July 1880, to the Government of India.

Letter from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, dated 21st August 1880, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Public Works Department.

OBSERVATIONS.—The Government of Bombay remarks in its letter now read :—

"While on the subject of Telegraphs, I am instructed "by His Excellency the Governor in Council to point out "that the charges are extremely high in India. The "charge for 20 words, exclusive of addresses, in Australia "is only one shilling. The telegraphs belong to the "Government of each Colony, and the receipts for "through messages are divided according to mileage by "a 'clearing house' arrangement. The distance covered "is up to 3,000 miles. In one year, during which His "Excellency the Right Honourable Sir J. Fergusson was "in South Australia, the number of telegraphic messages "in the Colony is believed to have been 50 per cent. of "that of postal letters, the charges being one shilling and "two pence respectively. It is, therefore, apparent that "the cheapness of rate caused the telegraph to be used "to an extent unknown in India, or even in the United "Kingdom, in proportion to the population, the saving of "time in so large a country being considerable.

"I am to state that, if the Government of India would "allow the Government of Bombay to try the experiment

"of charging half a rupee for twelve or twenty words "for *local* messages, guaranteeing the present amount "derived therefrom, His Excellency the Governor in Coun- "cil believes the results will be remarkable."

2. The Bombay Chamber of Commerce represent that in comparison with the tariffs in force in the United Kingdom and in Germany, the tariff in India appears to them to be exorbitant, and suggests, for the consideration of Government, the expediency of reduction to a minimum charge of eight annas for four words, with one anna more for every additional word, no charge being made, as at present, for the transmission of the address.

3. The Bengal Chamber of Commerce urge that the experience of other countries has shewn that a lowering of rates and a sliding scale of charges according to the length of the message has in no way tended to diminish the profit of their Telegraph Departments; and on this ground they suggest a minimum rate of twelve annas for four words (exclusive of address, which would be free) and one anna for each additional word.

4. These proposals are based on two hypotheses, (I) that the rates for telegraphic messages in India are unduly high, and (II) that a reduction in rates would be followed by an increase in the traffic which would more than compensate for the immediate loss in revenue.

5. The Government of Bombay and the Bombay Chamber of Commerce contend that the Telegraph Tariff of India is unreasonably high, compared with the tariffs in force in other countries; on this point there appears to be some misapprehension of the facts.

6. In Australia the charge, so far as can be ascertained, is one shilling for a minimum of ten words *within the limits of each Colony*. The inter-colonial rates vary from two to three shillings or more for a message of ten words, so that the Indian uniform tariff of one rupee, with free delivery for five miles, for distances which extend to 3,000 miles compares rather favorably than otherwise.

7. In Germany there is a fixed charge of 20 pfennige, irrespective of length, in addition to a word rate of 5 pfennige, and the address is charged for.

8. In Great Britain the minimum charge is one shilling, the number of words allowed twenty, the address is free, and a charge is made for delivery of six pence a mile beyond the first mile, and of a shilling a mile if the total distance exceeds three miles. The cost of a single rate message delivered at the average distance from the Telegraph Office at which Indian messages are delivered is one shilling and six pence.

9. In the United States of America the unit message is ten words, the address is free, and there is a charge for delivery beyond half a mile. The tariff is proportional to distance and varies from 25 cents to 1 dollar and a half for distances within 1,000 miles. For distances over 1,000 miles, between State and State, the rate is from 2 to 3 dollars.

10. The Government of India notices the admission made by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce that a fair comparison between results in England or in various countries of Europe and India is not possible, because the distances to be traversed here are, as a rule, so much greater; but differences in extent alone form only one, and that

not the most serious, of the difficulties in the way of making a fair comparison of the tariffs of different countries; and, unless the climate, internal resources, average individual prosperity, and social conditions of the countries whose tariffs it is sought to compare be also taken into account, such a comparison must be altogether misleading.

11. The area of India is roughly eight times that of United Germany, and thirteen times that of Great Britain. The greatest distance a message can be transmitted in England is about 500 miles; in India upwards of 3,000 miles. In Great Britain there is a temperate climate, a population dense, self-governing, and very wealthy, inhabiting a small area; it is a centre of trade, of science and of manufacture, where every appliance of a telegraph is locally made and procurable at very short notice, technical knowledge is there cheap and always available, and consequently a telegraph can be established there at a minimum cost and maintained with the least possible difficulty and expense.

12. In India there is, on the other hand, a tropical climate injurious to the materials of which a telegraph is composed, a country vast and in parts still almost unopened; a population poor, and in the mass ignorant, to whom the telegraph is an exotic; a country that requires to import the greater portion of the material and technical appliances for its telegraphs, and also its principal technical supervision, where it is necessary to keep large stocks of stores at great cost ready for emergencies, and where consequently a telegraph can only be established at very high cost and maintained with difficulty and expense.

13. In the United States, notwithstanding the advantages in climate, appliances, and in the character and means of the inhabitants as a whole, the tariff is considerably higher than in India; and it appears to the Government of India that the moderate simple tariff of one rupee for six words for all distances up to 3,000 miles, with free address and free delivery up to a distance of five miles, compares very favorably with the tariffs in force in other more fortunately situated countries.

14. It is urged, however, in support of the proposal for a reduction in telepraph rates that the adoption of a very low tariff is the only means of securing an adequate revenue; but this contention is not borne out by experience, and the Government of India, with the information before it, is forced to the conclusion that, while in no country and under no circumstances have reductions of the telegraph tariff resulted in a net gain, the instances are rare in which such reductions have not resulted in a loss of revenue.

15. At the commencement of the present year the Government of India, in order to obtain the benefit of an uniform tariff throughout the dominions administered by it, reduced the tariff between India and Burmah from Rs. 1-8 to Re. 1 for six words. The experience of three months' working of this tariff is reported to be that not only has the average cost per message been reduced in exactly the same proportion, shewing that there has been no increase in the length of messages, but the number of messages transmitted so far from shewing any equivalent increase has absolutely decreased. The decrease is doubtless due to stagnation of trade, but it serves to bear out the contention of the Telegraph Department in this

and other countries that the telegraph traffic follows, particularly in its augmentations, the fluctuations of trade and that it is influenced by the tariff only in a very secondary degree.

16. In the face of these experiences it is obvious that the Government could not look forward with any confidence to obtaining under a reduced tariff any increase in the net revenue, or even to the maintenance of the present net revenue of the Telegraph Department.

17. A low *uniform* tariff is obviously inconsistent with a still lower *local* tariff, and the Government, as at present advised, is not disposed to abandon the important principle of uniformity. The most essential feature of a telegraph tariff is that it shall be simple, intelligible to all, and easy in its application, so that the public shall themselves be able readily to calculate the payments due under all circumstances, and to verify the correctness of the charges made by the departmental employés. The present tariff appears to thoroughly fulfil these conditions.

18. The Government of India has quite recently had the question of a reduction of the inland telegraph tariff under consideration, and is fully alive to the advantages to be anticipated from such a measure when it can be introduced without retarding the progress of the Telegraph Department towards commercial solvency. There are undoubtedly conditions under which it might be a just and wise policy to fix the charges for telegraphic intercommunication at so low a rate that the cost of the administration must exceed the revenue, but such conditions only exist in India at present to a limited extent, if at all, and the Government of India is not prepared to adopt

any revision of the tariff, the effect of which would be to burden the general revenues in order that the senders of telegrams might be enabled to transmit them at a lower rate than the cost price.

19. The introduction and maintenance of the telegraph system in India has proved in the past extremely costly; and for very many years the general revenues of the country have suffered to provide for the maintenance of an institution from which, apart from its administrative and political value, only a very limited section of the community has reaped the benefit; and the time has now come when the Government may reasonably expect that the yearly expenditure of the department, including interest on the capital, shall be covered by the receipts from the public, *plus* the value of the messages despatched on the service of the Government itself.

20. With the existing tariff the Telegraph Department is now at length beginning to pay its working expenses, but the increased revenue of recent years is in great measure due to exceptional and temporary causes, and, although the stimulus given may not be altogether barren of permanent results, a continuance of the tariff at the present rate cannot be calculated upon, and it is improbable that the net revenue will for many years to come be sufficient to cover the working expenses in addition to interest on the capital invested. But in any future modification of the tariff that experience may shew to be desirable this object must be kept steadily in view.

21. The Capital Account of the Telegraph Department includes numerous items, such as charges consequent on military expeditions, cost of temporary and abandon-

ed lines, &c., &c., which are either properly chargeable to "revenue," and should have been charged off in the year in which they were incurred, or which have not added to the permanent value of the plant. The Government does not expect that the Telegraph Department should earn interest on a capital thus impoperly inflated: and the Capital Account of the Telegraph Department should be carefully scrutinized with a view to the elimination of such items and to the arrival at a fair valuation of the lines and appliances as they now stand, in communication with the Accountant-General of the Public Works Department.

22. On the capital value thus arrived at the Government expects that the telegraph revenue shall yield a fair interest after paying its working expenses. When the revenue shall be found to yield more than sufficient to cover these charges, the Governor-General in Council considers that such surplus may properly be applied to reducing the tariff in the interest of the senders of messages, and will be prepared to consider favorably any proposals that may be put forward with that object.

ORDER.—Ordered that a copy of this Resolution be communicated to the Director-General of Telegraphs in India for information and guidance, in reply to his letter No. 453T., dated 27th July, and to the Accountant-General, Public Works Department, for information and guidance.

That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Government of Bombay in the Public Works Department for information, in reply to its letter No. 10T-653., dated 3rd July 1880.

That copies be sent to the Chambers of Commerce in Bombay and Bengal, in reply to their letters dated 6th July and 21st August respectively, and to the Chambers of Commerce in Madras, Rangoon and Karachi for information.

And, further, that this Resolution be published in the Supplement to the *Gazette of India.*

From Chamber to the Government of India.

Calcutta, 15th November 1880.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 383 of the 5th of last month, forwarding copy of a Resolution relative to the tariff of rates for inland telegraph messages, in reply to their representation of the 21st August on that subject.

They have attentively considered the grounds upon which the Governor-General in Council has arrived at a conclusion adverse to the suggestions which they submitted, and they regret to learn that His Excellency is not at present prepared to adopt the modification of the tariff which they had hoped would have recommended itself to his Lordship's judgment.

The Committee, under all the circumstances set forth in the Resolution, will not now press their views further on the Government, save in respect to one amendment of the tariff which has perhaps not been sufficiently considered.

The decision of Government involves the continued heavy charge of double the ordinary rate for any message containing even one word in excess of the present minimum limitation.

A message containing six effective words costs the sender one rupee, or at the rate of 2 annas 8 pies per word; whereas, a message of seven words costs two rupees, or at the rate of 4 annas 9 pies per word.

For transmitting the former message of 6 words, and assuming the address and official instructions amount to 7 words, the Telegraph Department receives nearly 1 anna 3 pies per word; whereas, for the message of 7 words the Government receives at the rate of 2 annas 3 pies per word.

They respectfully submit that these are unfairly disproportionate charges, tending to discourage the transmission of the longer messages, which are a material advantage to the Telegraph administration, it being admitted that the proportion of unremunerative work by the gratuitous transmission of address, official instructions, &c., &c., is lessened according as the message increases in length.

The Committee therefore represent for the favorable consideration of His Excellency the Governor-General in Council, that while the present rate of one rupee for 6 words is continued, the charge for each additional word shall not exceed 2 annas.

TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION IN THE TOWN AND SUBURBS OF CALCUTTA.

The subject of providing greater facilities for telegraphic communication in the town and suburbs of Calcutta having been represented by the Chairman of the Municipality for the con-

sideration of the Government of Bengal, the Committee were requested to submit to the Lieutenant-Governor their opinion whether a demand really existed among the mercantile community for the proposed service; and they stated, in reply, that in their experience such necessity had not arisen, but that municipal purposes might be advantageously served by the establishment of small local branches at the principal police stations. At the same time the Committee suggested that as the Telegraph Office is at a considerable distance from the northern part of the town, and much time is lost in sending and receiving messages, a branch might be opened at some locality easy of access to European and Native merchants, whose places of business are so far distant from the Head Office in Dalhousie Square as to render the suggested branch a very appreciable arrangement.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.—

No. 855, *Calcutta,* 17*th September* 1880.

I am directed to send herewith copy of a letter No. 1728, dated the 19th July last, received from the Chairman of the Calcutta Municipality on the subject of providing greater facilities for telegraphic communication in the town and suburbs of Calcutta, and to request that the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce may be moved to favor the Lieutenant-Governor with their opinion whether there is really a demand among the mercantile

community for such telegraphic service as is contemplated in Mr. Beverley's letter.

From Chairman of the Corporation of the Town of Calcutta to Government of Bengal,—No. 1728. *Calcutta, 19th July* 1880.

I am desired by the Municipal Commissioners for the town of Calcutta to invite the attention of Government to the expediency of providing greater facilities for telegraphic communication in the town and suburbs of Calcutta.

2. Putting aside the offices attached to the Railway stations at Howrah and Sealdah, there is at present but one public Telegraph Office, *viz.*, that in Dalhousie Square, for the use of all the inhabitants of the town and suburbs, numbering at least three quarters of a million souls, and occupying an area of something like 35 square miles.

3. This single office, moreover, is only available for sending messages to distant places; there are absolutely no facilities whatever open to the public for communicating by telegraph either within the town itself or between the town and the suburbs.

4. The Municipal Commissioners are of opinion that the time has arrived when the Government should, for the sake of public convenience, offer facilities for telegraphic communication within the town and suburbs; and they believe that, with a judiciously selected network of offices and a reduced fee, a metropolitan telegraphic service might eventually be made a source of considerable profit to the public revenue.

Such a service would not only benefit the commercial and trading community of Calcutta, but would be of advantage to the Government itself for administrative and police purposes. On the outbreak of fires, for instance, an improved system of telegraphic communication would be invaluable.

5. Under these circumstances, I am to ask that His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor may be moved to take the subject into consideration, and to pass such orders in the matter as to him may seem expedient.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 27th September 1880.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt—on the 23rd instant—of your letter No. 855 of the 17th September, forwarding copy of a representation from the Chairman of the Corporation of the Town of Calcutta, dated the 19th July last, on the subject of providing greater facilities for telegraphic communication in the town and suburbs of Calcutta.

In reply to the inquiry instituted by His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor whether there is really a demand among the mercantile community for such telegraphic service as is contemplated by the Chairman of the Corporation, I am instructed by the Committee of the Chamber, to say that, in their experience, such demand has not at any time existed, and that present arrangements are, on the whole, sufficient for their purposes.

The Telegraph Office is at a somewhat inconvenient distance from places of business in the northern part of

the city, and a branch office in that locality—say at a point that could be easily reached by merchants in Burra Bazar—would be of great advantage to both European and native merchants by saving the time taken in sending messages to Dalhousie Square, and a corresponding convenience would result to the Head Office by diminishing the distance its messengers have now to go.

In the facilities for telegraphic service as suggested by Mr. Beverley were actually available to the masses of the inhabitants of the city and its suburbs, the Committee very much doubt if they would be resorted to to the extent he anticipates, or, to any appreciable extent, supersede present means of inter-communication; but they concur in his opinion that Municipal purposes would be advantageously served; and perhaps the principal police stations might be utilised as offices for small local branches.

This arrangement would appear, however, to be one for determination by the Corporation, and if the Commissioners saw their way clearly to a profitable, or, at least, a self-supporting scheme, probably His Honor would not object to its introduction.

DEPARTURE OF MAIL STEAMERS FROM BOMBAY.

The action taken by the Committee in this matter is fully set forth in the communications addressed by them to the Director-General of the Post Office and to the Government of India. The latter is in reply to a reference made by

the Secretary of State, who had been urged by various memorialists at home to arrange for the departure of the mail steamer from Bombay so as to admit of the Indian mails reaching London in ample time for acknowledgment by the Friday evening despatch from London. To that end the Marquis of Hartington is of opinion that the plan of a fixed day of the week all the year round must be abandoned, and the former system of alternate days in the North-East and South-West Monsoons reverted to, and the steamers' departure from Bombay arranged for Thursdays and Mondays: this would involve the mails leaving Calcutta on Mondays and Fridays.

Members will notice that while the Committee have accepted the latter day as the most convenient for closing mercantile correspondence, they have strongly protested against a Monday mail-day, since it would inevitably involve work on Sundays.

The present plan of a Wednesday closing has been found to be the most suitable, but the Committee have expressed their willingness, in the general interests, to waive their former objections to this arrangement being disturbed, provided Tuesday be fixed for the mails leaving Calcutta, although the Committee apprehend

that even that day will be found excessively inconvenient.

From Director-General of the Post Office of India to Chamber,—No. 93. *Calcutta, the* 5*th April* 1880.

Referring to the suggestion made in your letter to the Government of India, dated the 19th February last, to the effect that the train service across India might be accelerated by 2 or 3 hours, I have the honor to observe that an acceleration of the ordinary train once a week, when carrying the overland mail, would disorganize the entire railway mail services throughout India, the timing of which depends upon the trunk line from Calcutta to Bombay; and I do not think that it would be possible, under present conditions, to accelerate the daily service.

2. But the object in view might perhaps be attained by making the train leave Calcutta 2 hours earlier, *i.e.*, at 7 P.M. (Calcutta time) instead of 9 P.M. as at present. This would involve a closing of the Calcutta General Post Office at 6 P.M.

3. I may mention that the advantages of an earlier arrival of the train at Bombay would probably be found to be even greater than the Chamber suppose, for by allowing the steamer to leave Bombay by 10-30 A.M. instead of at 7 P.M., it would be possible to land the mails in London 15½ hours earlier, *i.e.*, at 10½ A.M. on Wednesday, instead of at 2 A.M. on Thursday. At present 24 hours are allowed for transit through Egypt on the homeward route (instead of 17 hours as on the outward route) because the homeward mails are due at Suez at 7 A.M. and 17 hours of Egyptian transit would bring the hour

of starting from Alexandria to midnight. Vessels cannot leave the Alexandria harbour till about 7 A.M., and so 7 hours have been added to the allowance for Egyptian transit on the homeward route. But with a start from Bombay at 10-30 A.M. the mails would reach Suez at 10-30 P.M. and an interval of 17 hours (as in the outward voyage) for Egyptian transit would allow of the mails leaving Alexandria by 3-30 P.M. on Thursday instead of 7 A.M. on Friday.

4. Perhaps, therefore, the Chamber will see their way to consider favorably the suggestion of starting the train from Calcutta at 7 P.M. (Calcutta time.) This change would, I believe, be of advantage to Allahabad, Agra, Simla, and Lahore.

Calcutta, 29th May 1880.

Your letter No. 93, of the 5th ultimo has been circulated among the members of the Chamber in order to obtain their individual opinions upon the arrangement suggested by you, namely, closing the mails at the General Post Office at 6, instead of 7 P.M., and starting the train from Howrah at 7, instead of 9 P.M.; and I am now directed by the Committee to state, in reply, that a large majority of the members have recorded their votes in favor of the proposition.

At the same time I am instructed to inform you that the majority have voted for the earlier closing of the mail on Wednesday, as that day is generally and strongly preferred to Tuesday or any other day of the week for the despatch of the overland post.

Members have no doubt been influenced also by the advantage you point out of the homeward mails leaving Bombay sufficiently early on Saturday to admit of the steamer arriving at Suez, and the mails starting from Alexandria, considerably in advance of the present hours of arrival and departure, and thereby reaching London in a correspondingly shorter time.

The Committee are bound, however, to place before you the views expressed by other members,—especially those who represent the banking business of the city—who are opposed to any change in the present arrangements which may tend to curtail the time at their disposal for posting their despatches. They are of opinion that by the co-operation of the East Indian and Great Indian Peninsular Railway Companies, the train which carries the homeward mails may be materially accelerated by avoiding stoppages at many of the minor stations, and minimising the detention at the principal halting places, Allahabad, Jubbulpore, &c., by which means the present closing hour and time for starting from Howrah can be continued, and any inconvenience to the travelling public which might follow the suggested change thereby avoided.

The Committee admit that there is much force in the views expressed by the minority; and in placing the two sides of the question before you, they believe that the interests of all concerned may be fully consulted by the following plan :—

The Committee propose that the daily mail service should be carried on by a train leaving Howrah at 7 P.M., as suggested by you; but that on Wednesday a special

overland mail train with a Post Office van and a limited number of carriages should be despatched, as at present, at 9 P.M., in addition to the ordinary train at 7 P.M.

By closing the mails at the Post Office at 6 o'clock the bulk of the correspondence would most likely go forward by the ordinary train, and probably the earlier departure would suit most passengers better than the 9 P.M. departure. The train would be due at Mokameh at 5-41 the next morning, and by the time appointed for leaving that station—say at 6-11—it would be overtaken by the special mail train, and the van and carriages could either be joined on to it or the mails and passengers transferred.

The Committee apprehend that the cost of such special mail would not be more than could be met by a moderate late-letter fee on every cover sent, and by an addition to the ordinary fare for passengers who may prefer to travel by it.

They will be glad if you will communicate with the Railway Companies on the subject, and oblige the Chamber with the result of your reference and your opinion on the proposal now submitted.

Calcutta, 24th July 1880.

The attention of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce has been called to a letter addressed to you by the Bombay Chamber, and published in the *Bombay Gazette* newspaper of the 19th instant.

I am instructed to refer to this letter, and for your consideration to notice some of the arguments brought

forward in favour of a Friday departure of the mail steamer from Bombay.

The Bombay Chamber of Commerce have stated that apparently Calcutta merchants can advance no better reason for their objection to a Tuesday mail day than a mere predilection for Wednesday, but it is submitted that the same arguments which have been advanced by the Bombay Chamber of Commerce against the closing of the mails there on Monday apply as strongly against the mails being closed at Calcutta on Tuesday.

If, as is stated in the letter referred to, Bombay merchants have found that one day does not give sufficient time in which to prepare documents for their one article of export, so Calcutta merchants have found from experience (acquired when mails during a portion of the year were closed here on Tuesday) that two days are insufficient for the preparation of all that is required, having regard to the great variety of articles which constitute the trade of this port.

The Bombay Chamber make light of the circumstance that an evening departure of the steamer involves a delay of some eight hours not only of the Calcutta mails but of the whole of the mails of India, (excepting those of Bombay,) but it must surely be obvious that the Bombay proposal sacrifices the interests of the many to those of the few.

It is suggested that, in opposing the proposition for a Tuesday mail day, we lose sight of the interests of London merchants and of those living in the northern towns of Great Britain; but this is not so: my Committee are well aware of the inconvenience caused to

their correspondents by the present system, whereby letters are often delivered only on the out-going mail day; but it is believed that under the arrangement proposed by you in your letter No. 93 of the 5th April last the mails would be delivered in London and the northern towns of the United Kingdom on days which would be found suitable.

In conclusion, I am directed to say that my Committee feel sure that the Bengal Chamber of Commerce would re-consider their request for the continuance of a Wednesday mail day for Calcutta, if it could be shown (as stated by Bombay) that the general public in India and at home would benefit by the mail being closed here on some other day. They will strongly object, however, to be inconvenienced by a Tuesday mail day, merely in order that Bombay merchants shall have what they so pertinaciously advocate, notwithstanding that an alternative has been suggested which, although not thoroughly agreeable to Bombay, would, it is believed, meet the wishes of all others concerned, and give to the Western port the Saturday half-holiday which formerly was all that was asked for.

From Government of India to the Chamber.

No. 2880, *Simla,* 18*th September* 1880.

I am directed by the Governor-General in Council to request that you will lay before your Chamber the accompanying despatches from Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India to the Government of India, No. 130, dated 22nd April, and Nos. 270 and 271, both dated 19th August, transmitting memorials from the Chambers

of Commerce of Manchester, Huddersfield, Glasgow, Liverpool and Dundee, from the Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China, and from the "Leading Firms and Companies in London interested in the Indian Mail Service," in which the memorialists represent the inconvenience felt in Great Britain in consequence of the despatch of the English mails from Bombay on Saturday.

2. In his despatch No. 271, Lord Hartington also informs the Government of India that on the 5th August he received a very important deputation of gentlemen representing the various Chambers of Commerce, Banks, and Mercantile bodies interested in this question.

3. In order to meet the views of the mercantile community of Great Britain in this matter, which appear to the Marquis of Hartington to be reasonable, His Lordship suggests that the mails be despatched from Bombay on Thursday in the fair season and on Monday in the monsoon.

4. This proposal assumes that the mails will continue to leave Bombay in the evening as heretofore. The Governor-General in Council, however, was disposed, before the receipt of Lord Hartington's despatch, to conclude that the interests of the general mercantile community in India required that the mails should be despatched from Bombay, not, as heretofore, in the evening, but in the morning, as soon as possible after the arrival of the mail train in Bombay. This alternative certainly involves the detention through the night of the mails originating in Bombay itself and the neighbourhood; but, owing to the impracticability of the mail steamer leaving Alexandria Harbour in darkness, a morning despatch

from Bombay as compared with the despatch of the mails the previous night would cause a delay of only eight hours in the delivery of the mails in London : or, putting the case otherwise, if the mails are despatched in the morning from Bombay, instead of, say, eight hours later, in the evening, they will be delivered in London sixteen hours earlier.

5. It seems possible that, under these circumstances, the mercantile community of Great Britain might be satisfied if the mails were despatched from Bombay on Friday morning in the fair season and Tuesday morning in the monsoon, which would involve the closure of the mails at—

	In the fair season.	In the monsoon.
Calcutta ...	Tuesday.	Saturday.
Madras ..	Wednesday.	Sunday.

6. The interests of the mercantile communities of the Presidency Towns appear to the Governor-General in Council to be almost exclusively concerned in this matter : the Government and the general community are, comparatively, indifferent as to the days of the week on which the mails leave Bombay.

7. I am, accordingly, to request that you will move your Chamber to state, at its earliest possible convenience, its final views upon the whole subject, noting—

1*st*.—Whether it desires that the mails should start from Bombay in the morning at 10 A.M., or in the evening at sunset.

2*ndly*.—Whether, in its opinion, the interests of the mercantile community will suffer if the principle of one fixed day for the departure of the mails from Bombay be surrendered.

3rdly.—If that principle should be maintained, on what fixed day in the week the mail should leave Bombay.

4thly.—If the day of departure should vary with the season, what day should be fixed in the fair season, and what in the monsoon.

8. In dealing with this subject, the Chamber of Commerce will, doubtless, bear in mind that from the nature of the case it is impracticable to make such arrangements as would be the most convenient possible, even for each of the three Presidency Towns; and that the arrangements which are required in the interests of Great Britain cannot, apparently, be made to conform to the interests of the Presidency Towns in India. Under these circumstances, it seems necessary that those whose interests conflict should each concede as much as they can without sacrificing what seems to them indispensable. It is desirable therefore that the Chamber, while stating the arrangement which would most completely suit the local convenience, should specify the extent to which it considers the local interest might, out of consideration for the interests of other places, be surrendered without too great inconvenience.

9. It will be understood that, inasmuch as the interests of the mercantile communities of India and Great Britain appear to conflict in this matter, it may not be in the power of the Governor-General in Council to secure the adoption of the alternative desired in India, or which may seem to him the best in the general Indian interest. All that His Excellency in Council can do is to take care that the interests of India are clearly recognised and fully weighed.

From the Secretary of State for India,—to the Government of India No 130 *(Financial),—dated* 22*nd April* 1880.

With reference to my despatch, dated the 30th October 1879, No. 413, I forward herewith for your information a copy of a letter* from the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, representing the inconvenience occasioned to the mercantile communities in the north of England and in Scotland by the despatch of the mails from Bombay on Saturday; and I shall be glad to learn whether you can see your way to the adoption of an arrangement which will obviate this inconvenience.

* Dated 25th March 1880.

From B. ARMITAGE, ESQ., *President, Chamber of Commerce, Manchester, to the Secretary of State for India.—Dated* 25*th March* 1880.

When a deputation from the Manchester Chamber of Commerce had the honor of an interview with Your Lordship on the 6th February last, the opportunity was taken of pointing out the serious inconvenience suffered by the mercantile communities of Manchester, Liverpool, and other towns in the north of England and in Scotland, by the arrangement under which the Indian mails were timed to arrive just before the closing and despatch of those outward. In illustration, I have now respectfully to point out that last week and the week preceding the letters from India were delivered on Friday, those to India despatched at 11-35 the same morning.

The present week's mail has arrived in Manchester on Thursday; even this allows too short a time for fully answering letters; whilst in the two instances of later arrival, and which may be of frequent occurrence, it is manifest that the inconvenience must be very great.

Your Lordship will no doubt have been informed that the Chamber of Commerce of Bombay has represented that inconvenience in equal, if not greater, degree is entailed at that port by the despatch of the mail steamers thence on Saturday evening; and is strongly supported by the Bombay Government in memorialising for the closing of the mails there on Friday evening.

These suggestions I am desired by the Directors of the Manchester Chamber earnestly to recommend to Your Lordship.

From the Secretary of State for India,—to the Government of India. No. 270 *(Financial), dated* 19*th August* 1880.

In continuation of Lord Cranbrook's despatch of the 22nd April last, No. 130, I forward herewith copies of letters* from the Incorporated Chambers of Commerce at Huddersfield and Glasgow, from the Chartered Bank of India, Australia, and China, and from Viscount Sandon on the part of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, together with copies of the memorials referred to therein; and I request that I may be furnished as early as possible with a reply to the enquiry contained in the despatch above referred to, as to the possibility of adopting an arrangement by which the great inconvenience now felt in regard to the arrival of the Indian mails in England may be removed.

* Dated 17th, 20th and 27th July 1880.

From C. Mills Esq., *Secretary, Incorporated Chamber of Commerce, Huddersfield, to the Secretary of State for India.—Dated* 17*th July* 1880.

I have the honor to transmit to your Lordship the enclosed memorial of the Council of this Chamber on the

subject of the Indian mails, and trust it will receive Your Lordship's favorable consideration.

To the Secretary of State for India.—Dated 17th July 1880.

The memorial of the Huddersfield Incorporated Chamber of Commerce.

SHEWETH,—That six months' experience of the working of the Indian mails under the new Time Table has afforded abundant proof that the objections to the arrangement, which at the outset were expressed regarding it, were well founded. The arrival of the mail on Thursday does not allow proper and sufficient time for letters to be replied to by the next return mail. This is found to be the case even in London, where the outward mail closes on Friday. In other commercial cities of the United Kingdom the inconvenience is still greater, as in those places the mail arrives either after or just before the close of the outward mail.

As the period for arranging the new Time Table for the year 1881 is approaching, Your memorialists would respectfully but earnestly request Your Lordship to restore the system which was in force previously, whereby the arrival of the mail in London took place in the early part of each week. The change from that to the present plan, although due entirely to the decision of the Government of India, has not, your memorialists believe, proved acceptable even in India; whilst in this country it has had the effect of almost completely destroying the advantages of the accelerated service which the Government made such strenuous efforts to secure under the new mail contract.

From I. H. GWYTHER, *Manager, Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China, London, to the Under-Secretary of State for India. Dated 20th July* 1880.

I have the honor to enclose a memorial* addressed to the Secretary of State for India and signed by the leading Firms and Companies in London interested in the Indian Mail Service, requesting His Lordship to induce the Government of India to reconsider their decision fixing Saturday as the day for the departure of the mails from Bombay, and restore the system of the mails from India arriving in London in the early part of each week.

From W. C. MULLINS, ESQ., *Secretary, Chartered Bank of India, Australia, and China, London, to the Under-Secretary of State for India.—Dated 20th July* 1880.

I have the honor to enclose two memorials* addressed to the Secretary of State for India,—one signed by the Leading Firms and Companies in Manchester, the other signed by the Chamber of Commerce Bradford,—requesting His Lordship to induce the Government of India to reconsider their decision fixing Saturday as the day for the departure of the Indian mails from Bombay; and I shall feel greatly obliged if you will bring these memorials to His Lordship's notice, and ascertain if he can appoint a day for receiving a deputation on the subject.

From M. ANDERSON ESQ., *Secretary, Chamber of Commerce and Manufactures, Glasgow, to the Secretary of State for India.—Dated 27th July* 1880.

I beg to hand you herewith a memorial by this Chamber on the subject of the irregular delivery of the mails

* These memorials are identical with that forwarded by the Huddersfield Incorporated Chamber of Commerce.

from India, China, and Australia, and praying for such alterations as will ensure a regular and earlier delivery.

To the Secretary of State for India.—Dated 25th July 1880.

The memorial of the Chamber of Commerce and Manufactures in the City of Glasgow.

SHEWETH,—That in the month of February last your memorialists brought under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government the great inconvenience which merchants, manufacturers, and others in this city suffered from irregularity and delay in delivery of the weekly mails from India, China and Australia carried by the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Ship Company.

The mails for the East have, for many years, been made up in the provinces upon Thursday of each week for despatch by Friday's mail from London; and this arrangement, having been found suitable and convenient, is still retained.

Since the new contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Ship Company, which commenced in December last, it has, however, been found quite impracticable in most cases to reply by the outgoing Friday's mail to correspondence due by that week's inward mail.

The following statement will show the dates upon which the mails were delivered in this city from the 19th December till 16th June last:—

One mail on Wednesday.
Eight mails on Thursday.
Fourteen mails on Friday.
One mail on Saturday.
Two mails on Monday succeeding.

The mails carried by the Messageries Maritimes Company, leaving the East a week after those despatched by the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Ship Company, are generally delivered in this country only two days later, thus saving several days on the passage.

Your memorialists feel the delay by the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Ship Company to be a serious public inconvenience, and they therefore respectfully pray that Your Lordship may take this matter into your consideration, and that arrangements be made to ensure a regular and earlier delivery in the provinces, in no case later than Wednesday in each week, so as to allow of a reply being sent by the outward mail of the same week.

From VISCOUNT SANDON, *Westminster, to the Secretary of State for India.—Dated 26th July* 1880.

I beg to transmit to you a memorial from the Chamber of Commerce of Liverpool on the subject of the Eastern Mail Service, and to beg your careful consideration of the subject. I shall be obliged to you to be so good as to forward to me a reply which I may send to the Chamber.

To the Secretary of State for India.—Dated 22nd July 1880.

The memorial of the Incorporated Chamber of Commerce, Liverpool.

SHEWETH,—That several representations have been made to your memorialists, pointing out that the apprehensions entertained with regard to the satisfactory working of the Eastern Mail Service under the new Time Table have had abundant proof in the serious inconveniences to

which the existing arrangement has given rise during the past six months at home and in the East.

2. That in especial the Chamber of Commerce at Bombay have called the attention of your memorialists to the serious inconveniences experienced by merchants and traders there through the Saturday evening departure thence, the statements regarding which have already been communicated to Her Majesty's Government.

3. That, under the new Time Table, the Eastern mails become due in London at 2 A.M. on Thursday, where it is deemed that sufficient time is not afforded for letters to be replied to by the next outgoing mail, which closes on Friday.

4. That as regards the large cities and towns in the provinces, as well as in the provinces generally, the new Time Table is found to operate most unsatisfactorily, and to give rise to even still greater inconvenience, as in those districts the Eastern mail arrives either after or just before the close of the outward mail.

5. That no port or place being more deeply interested in the proper adjustment of mail services to the needs of the commercial community than the Port of Liverpool, and in especial with regard to the Eastern Mail Service, your memorialists accordingly communicated with the merchants of this port trading with the East on the subject of the representations referred to, and the feeling is unanimous here that the Time Table now in force gives rise to most serious inconveniences.

6. Your memorialists therefore pray that there will be, on the part of Her Majesty's Government, a return to the system whereby the arrivals of the mails in London from

the East took place earlier in the week, or that such other measures will be adopted as will remove the existing grievances of which complaint is made, as well as amply facilitate postal communications with and from the East.

From the Secretary of State for India, to the Government of India, No. 271 (Financial), dated 19th August 1880.

In continuation of my despatch of this day's date, No. 270, on the subject of the date of the mails leaving Bombay, I forward a copy of a further memorial* from the Chamber of Commerce at Dundee; and I have to inform Your Excellency that on the 5th instant I received at this office a very important deputation of gentlemen representing the various Chambers of Commerce, Banks, and Mercantile Bodies interested in the question.

2. A strong feeling was expressed by them in favor of a restoration of the system under which letters used to be delivered in London on Monday, which would imply a departure from Bombay on Wednesday in the fair season and on Monday during the monsoon.

3. It was suggested that if it was necessary to have a fixed day for the departure from Bombay throughout the year Tuesday would be the most suitable; but this is open to the objection that the mails would arrive in London on Sunday during the larger portion of the year. A departure from Bombay on Wednesday would seem to meet the views of all those in the United Kingdom who are interested in the subject, except that during the monsoon letters would not be delivered in Scotland in time for a reply the same week.

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* Identical with that from Hudders field, see p.2.

4. I am much impressed with the importance of meeting the views of the mercantile community in this matter, which appear to me to be reasonable, and I cannot avoid the conclusion that the plan of having one fixed day of the week for the departure from India all the year round must be given up. If this concession be made by India, the precise days to be fixed for the departure of the mails from Bombay may be left to be mainly determined by the convenience of the mercantile community in India, subject to the condition that the mail shall arrive in London not later than Tuesday. So far as I am able to judge, a despatch from Bombay on Thursday in the fair season and Monday in the monsoon will best secure this result, as this will admit of the mails leaving Calcutta on Monday and Friday, and Madras on Tuesday and Saturday, respectively, arriving in London in the fair season on Tuesday and in the monsoon on Monday.

5 It is understood that the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company require four months' notice of any change, so that there is an urgent need of settling the dates in order that the Time Tables for 1881 may be prepared forthwith.

6. I shall be glad to learn Your Excellency's reply by telegraph as early as possible.

From Chamber to Government of India.

Calcutta, 8th October 1880.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 2880 of the 18th ultimo, relative to the departure of mail steamers from Bombay and corresponding despatch of mails from Calcutta.

The Committee had hoped to submit for the consideration of His Excellency the Governor General in Council the views of the Chamber on this subject before business was interrupted by the Doorga Poojah Vacation, but they much regret they have been unable to ascertain, thus far, the opinions of all the members, as the circulation of the correspondence has involved considerable time and delay.

The Committee hope however to be in a position very shortly after the holidays to communicate the final views of the Chamber.

Calcutta, 23rd October 1880.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me, in continuation of my acknowledgment of the 8th instant, to submit the following reply to your letter No. 2880 of the 18th ultimo, regarding the departure of the English mails from Bombay.

The proposition which the Committee of the Chamber have to consider comes before them under no favourable auspices, since His Excellency the Governor-General in Council is apprehensive of inability to secure the adoption of arrangements which may seem to His Excellency the best in the general Indian interest, and Her Majesty's Secretary of State evidently subordinates the convenience of the commercial community of this city to that of the several bodies who have been in communication with His Lordship on the subject.

On the question of a fixed day for the departure from Bombay throughout the year, the Committee direct me to point out that that arangement was incidentally suggested by them to the Director-General of the Post Office,

when replying to his reference regarding the most convenient alternate days in the noth-east and south-west monsoons under the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company's new contract, and it appears to have been promptly accepted by him and the Government of India as an improvement on the other system ; it received the sanction of Her Majesty's Postmaster-General, and superseded the system of alternate days.

But a restoration of the former arrangement has been of late strongly urged by the Home memorialists, with the view to the mails from India being delivered in London early in the week ; and, influenced by their representations, the Secretary of State has come to the conclusion that the plan of having one fixed day of the week for the departure from India all the year round must be given up ; and the Marquis of Hartington adds that, if that concession be made by India, the precise days to be fixed for the departure from Bombay may be mainly determined by the convenience of the mercantile community of this country. The Committee respectfully submit that this is a mere semblance of deference to the commercial public of Calcutta, inasmuch as His Lordship shows that a Tuesday arrival in London involves a Monday closing here, for a considerable portion of the year,—an arrangement which would be utterly unsuited to the business requirements of this port.

The Government of India, however, propose Tuesdays for the fair season and Saturdays during the monsoon ; but while the former day would be less inconvenient, the latter is unanimously objected to not only as far as Calcutta is concerned, but as involving the closing of of mails at Madras on Sundays, which the Committee

apprehend would be regarded as an intolerable hardship by the merchants there, an arrangement far out-weighing the objections to the mails reaching London on those days as recorded in the third paragraph of the Secretary of State's despatch.

The Committee do not underrate the difficulty of reconciling conflicting interests and of conforming the postal arrangements of Presidency towns in India to the convenience of the chief centres of business in Great Britain, and their desire is to suggest such a plan as may be the least disadvantageous to all concerned: but they are constrained to the conclusion that the magnitude of the trade of Calcutta and the consequent amount of mail work involved have not been adequately considered in the proposed arrangements: it is their duty to press this material point on the attention of His Excellency in Council and of the Secretary of State: and on that ground alone the Committee submit that they who conduct the commerce of this port should be permitted to have a preferential voice in a matter which affects interests far more extensive and important than those of the other Presidency towns.

Setting aside, however, the relative claims of Bombay and Madras, and having regard solely to the convenience of merchants in London and the provincial towns of Great Britain, the Committee are of opinion that, according to the table of dates for closing the mails prepared by the Director-General of the Post Office, the arrangements for a fixed day throughout the year and the delivery of mails in London, Manchester, and other important centres of business, on days which would suit their convenience, are not impracticable.

The Table shows that a fixed departure from Bombay on Mondays will admit of the mails reaching London on Saturdays in the fair season, and on Mondays during the monsoon months.

No more convenient arrangement could be devised for, or desired by, the merchants of that city; and a less scrupulous objection to the transmission of mails on Sundays, if they chanced to arrive on those days, would admit of the delivery of letters in provincial places of business almost simultaneously with delivery in London.

But a Monday mail day all the year round would in all probability be found inconvenient to the mercantile community of Bombay; and, if this be so, the Committee think their own former objection to a Tuesday closing in Calcutta might be waived, in order to give that Presidency the advantage of a Friday evening departure. If that would not admit of the mails arriving in London in time to suit the convenience of the English public, the object might be obtained by a Friday morning departure, which, according to the Director-General of the Post Office, would possibly result in a saving of nearly 16 hours.

If, however, the Committee fail in their endeavour to obtain the concurrence and support of the Governor-General in Council and of the Secretary of State in respect of a fixed weekly despatch from India, and if the system of alternate days is to be restored, they have to consider those suggested in the despatch of the Marquis of Hartington and in your letter under reply,—the former proposing Mondays and Fridays, and the latter Tuesdays and Saturdays, for the fair and monsoon seasons respectively.

For the reasons already recorded, the Committee regret they are precluded from accepting either proposition in its entirety; they have stated their objections to closing on Mondays and Saturdays, and they believe sufficient grounds have been shown why those days would not be suitable; they have therefore, to deal only with Friday for the monsoon, and Tusday for the fair season.

The Committee elect the former without hesitation as it is of all the days in the week the most convenient for Calcutta, and they have already stated that to meet the general interests they waive their objection to Tuesday.

In conclusion, the Committee desire me to express their deep conviction that the convenience of those who despatch a mail should be held paramount to that of the recipients of it. The conditions of life in India are so onerous that any interference with the opportunities for relaxation which at present exist cannot be too strongly deprecated; and the Committee trust that the concession which they make in agreeing to a Tuesday closing will be appreciated and accepted as a settlement of the question.

From Bombay Chamber— Bombay, 11th June 1880.

The departure of the overland mail steamers from Bombay on Saturdays is, as your Chamber is aware, productive of very great inconvenience to the mercantile community of Bombay, and constant complaints have been received from all the Northern Towns in the United Kingdom of the inconvenience which they also suffer under the present arrangements, their letters from India arriving just before the departure of the out going mails to India.

Since the new mail contract came into force at the commencement of this year, the mail steamers have left Bombay at 7 P.M. In February last, however, the Government of India, desirous to make some concession to the wishes of the inhabitants of this city, proposed that the Post Office should close at noon and the mail steamers should leave at 2-30 P.M. on Saturdays, but this arrangement was not approved of, as it would have been most inconvenient to the export trade of this port. A printed copy of the proceedings of the Chamber held on the 2nd March last to discuss this proposal is sent by Book Post for the information of your Chamber.

We are now asked by the Director-General of the Post Office of India to express an opinion as to how far a departure of the mail steamer from Bombay at 10-30 A.M. on Saturdays would meet the convenience of the mercantile community of Bombay. It is obvious that similar objections to those raised by the export trade to the closing of the Post Office at noon would apply to this new proposal; nor is there any other arrangement than a Friday evening departure which would suit the convenience of the various trading interests concerned.

A Friday evening departure from Bombay would require the closing of the mails in Calcutta on Tuesday evening, but we understand that your Chamber objects to this on the ground that a Tuesday closing is considered too early in the week. It seems to this Chamber that the mercantile community of Calcutta are most unreasonable if their objection merely rests on a predilection for Wednesday instead of Tuesday, and I am desired to ask you, if you will kindly state whether there are any strong or insurmountable reasons why the mail should not leave

Calcutta on Tuesdays, which would suit every interest in India, and would be more convenient for Indian trading interests at home.

From Chamber to Bombay Chamber.

Calcutta, 19th June 1880.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 11th instant, on the subject of the departure of the overland mail steamers.

The Committee of this Chamber desire me to say that they have, for some time, been aware that the mercantile community of Bombay had found a Saturday noon closing of the mail to be inconvenient, and that it had also proved so to merchants in the northern towns of England, and with a desire to meet the views of all, it has been proposed by the Director-General of the Post Office that the train service from Calcutta be accelerated so as to admit of an earlier arrival by 2 to 3 hours, and a consequent early Saturday morning departure of the steamer from Bombay, which would admit of a Friday evening closing there, and, it is calculated, an earlier delivery of the mails in London by some 15 hours.

This arrangement will no doubt entail considerable inconvenience to the Calcutta community by causing either an inconveniently early closing and despatch of the mails on Wednesday evening, or the payment of extra fees to admit of a special train being despatched at a later hour to overtake the ordinary train which might be started earlier; but, as in the case where the members of this Chamber in deference to Bombay did not press for a Friday night departure from Calcutta (which was then

considered the most suitable of all), so are they now anxious, as far as possible, to meet the views of your Chamber.

My Committee much regret that the commercial community of Calcutta should be considered unreasonable in objecting to a closing of the mails on Tuesday, and they can only say that the question has been put before the members of the Chamber who have emphatically expressed the opinion that, owing to the nature and extent of their produce business and the manner in which it is conducted, Tuesday would be a most inconvenient day, as they have already found from experience, and for the same reasons that the Bombay merchants object to the closing of the mails on Monday.

It seems to this Chamber that the Bombay community have no sufficient grounds for their objection to an early Saturday morning sailing of the steamer, which would practically give them a Friday mail-day, for the Post Office could be closed that evening at any hour found most convenient.

While, therefore, Bombay secures for itself a mail-day most suitable for its own purposes and arrangements, Calcutta presses for the advantage of an additional day for its generally heavier business requirements, as well as to avoid the detention of its overland correspondence for 7 or 8 hours from the time of arrival in the morning till the steamer starts in the evening: and these are circumstances which, it is submitted, should have weight and consideration with your Chamber and the community of your city.

In proposing the arrangement now advocated, Calcutta interests are not the only ones consulted, for it is found

that it would be an advantage to the principal towns of Northern India, and this, the Committee think, should not be lost sight of by the Bombay community when considering what day would be best suitable to themselves.

EXTENSION OF THE TEA TRADE TO THE AUSTRALIAN COLONIES.

In the Committee's last report were noticed the measures taken for the formation of a Syndicate with the view to the introduction into the markets of the Australian colonies of teas produced in this country; and it is very gratifying to record the extremely satisfactory results of the endeavours so far made to gain that important object. The opportunity afforded by the International Exhibition in Melbourne was judiciously availed of to submit for public inspection and sale the various qualities of tea selected as the most suitable to the colonial market; and upon the highly successful issue of their operations the Calcutta Syndicate have valid reasons for congratulation and encouragement to proceed in their well directed enterprise.

In connection with this subject and the development of trade generally between this country and the colonies, the Committee reproduce a very interesting account of a meeting of repre-

sentatives of India, Ceylon, and the Colonies, lately held in Melbourne, which they believe will be regarded as a most promising inauguration of an intercourse which may lead to results of great commercial importance.

A MEETING of gentlemen representing India, the Straits Settlements, Ceylon, the various Australasian colonies, and the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce, was held yesterday afternoon at the office of Sir Herbert Sandford, Executive Commissioner of Great Britain, for the purpose of conferring as to the best means which should be adopted for developing a more extensive trade with India and the other Eastern British possessions. The meeting was convened by Mr. E. A. Buck, Commissioner for India, and Sir Herbert Sandford was in the chair.

In opening the proceedings, the chairman expressed his pleasure in presiding, and referred to the fact of the Indian Government having deputed a special representative to the Exhibition. This was the first of the kind at which a gentleman had been directly charged with the supervision of the interests of that nation, and it indicated a desire to establish a most commendable and advantageous commercial connection between its territory and Australasia. He introduced Mr. Buck, who desired to address the meeting on the subject.

Mr. Buck then read the following paper:—

"The main issue underlying the proposition placed before this meeting appears to be, how far the governing or administrative authorities in each of the countries concerned can usefully take action for the promotion of Indo-Australian commerce without over-stepping the limit

at which their action becomes undue interference, and I shall be glad if my apologies for dilating at some little length upon this issue be accepted, because it is an argument used *in limine* by a large section, that governing or administrative authorities should not meddle with commercial matters at all. My own opinion is that action should be taken with great caution, withdrawn with the utmost expedition when no longer required, and guided at every step by the advice of "experts," under which term, here and elsewhere, I denote those who have commercial experience, acknowledged judgment, and practical acquaintance with the special branches of business concerned, and whose advice, in the person of the representatives of the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce, we are at this meeting fortunately able to ask. Within these limits I think the duties of administrative authorities may fairly be extended to the following action :—

1. To ascertain what branches of commerce there are which, if developed, will benefit the country which they administer.

2. To attract the attention of experts to them.

3. To clear away national obstacles to their development.

4. To assist, with subsidies or otherwise, pioneering enterprise.

In support of the position which I have assumed, may I be permitted to quote the following remarks from Mr. W. W. Hunter's Life of Lord Mayo, one of the first of our Indian administrators, who attached serious importance to the possibilities of Indo-Australian commerce, and who, perhaps, initiated that interest in the subject

which has now found expression in the prominent part taken by the Government of India in this Exhibition:—"In developing the trade and exploring the products and capabilities of the country, he (Lord Mayo) held that the duty of the Government ceased when it had by practical experiments pointed out the way and removed the obstacles from it. For the fruits of his efforts, whether in agriculture or commerce, he looked to private enterprise. But he held that it was a proper function of Government, situated as the Indian Government is, to supply the initial knowledge without which private enterprise in India does not come into play." I will first note as briefly as I can the actual steps which the Australian and Indian administrations have already taken to promote commercial relations between the two countries, in order to explain the position in which we now stand. The first honors belong to New South Wales and Victoria, the Governments of which colonies have, by their important and, as regards other countries, generous action in establishing international exhibitions, afforded that opportunity of making inquiry and investigation which I have put forward as the first legitimate duty of a Government. India has seconded their action by responding to the invitation which it received to be represented at their Exhibitions. Attention may here be drawn for a moment to one great difference between what may, for brevity's sake, be termed "white" and "black" countries. In the former, the people are to a very great extent, each in his own line, their own administrators, and generally require very little from Government further than the provision of opportunities for investigation. Not so with India and the colonies of the tropics, in which the

task of collecting facts and initiating enterprise is thrown more completely upon Government itself, sufficient proof of which may be found in the fact that, while the Indian Court of the Exhibition contains several thousand exhibits, it has only been attended by two exhibitors from India, of whom one has already returned, and the other would not have come at all but for the active support and assistance of this Exhibition Committee in India. Government, in accepting the invitation of Australia, had to take the whole of the work upon itself, and I believe that the commissioners from Ceylon and the Straits will admit that the same conditions exist in these colonies. To return to the exhibitions; if I have to express regret that a better display from India was not afforded at Sydney, I am able to qualify the apology by asserting that, but for the New South Wales Exhibition, the interest taken by the Indian Government in this Exhibition would not have been what it is. On that occasion I have the authority of Major Clementi for stating, that only Madras and the department, which I represent, of Agriculture and Commerce in the North-Western Provinces supplied exhibits of any importance, and the exhibits from the latter were only due to the personal belief which I had gained in a private visit to the Melbourne Exhibition of 1875, that a sufficient field was open for Indo-Australian commerce—a field which I can still in 1880 assert to be to a great extent yet lying fallow. Fortunately Major Clementi's able and encouraging letters from Sydney arrived at a time when the earnest invitation from Melbourne, and the strong lead given by the highest authorities in Great Britain, had already induced the Central Government at Calcutta to press upon the Government of every province in India the importance of

taking more general action upon the occasion of this Exhibition; and the completeness of the collections now in the Indian Court is due entirely to the interest and energetic steps taken, in response to the call thus made, by the official representatives of Government in each province, upon whom, and not upon the Central Committee, fell the real burden of doing, each in his own person, the work of several hundred exhibitors. In addition to these steps Government co-operated with the merchants of Calcutta in arranging for the representation of tea interests by a special commissioner. Similar action has been taken in other colonies of Australia, and the presence at Melbourne of the able representatives sent by the Government of each Australasian colony, and the wonderful excellence of their collections, testify to the great official interest which, in these colonies, is permitted to be taken in commercial development, and for an extension of which interest, in the direction of India, I have this day the honor to ask those gentlemen; for I am quite sure that if we leave things as they are without establishing any active agency to continue inquiry, and to keep alive special interest in Indo-Australian trade after the close of the Exhibition, the present apathy on the subject will be renewed. The Central Government gave at the same time a practical token of their own interest in the undertaking by the appointment, as their special representative at Melbourne, of Mr. O'Conor, who in his position of assistant-secretary in the Central Department of Commerce and Government statist, was selected as the official most qualified to give and receive information.

My own official duties were originally intended to end with the completion of consignments from India, my pre-

sence in Melbourne being mainly due to an accidental intention which I had formerly of visiting the colonies on furlough.

Such is an outline of the official action which has led to the present position, and we have now to ask what, if any further, official steps can be taken by us all in order to afford practical effect to the labor and expenditure already incurred. The statements I have brought forward indicate that official action must be continued on behalf of the natives of India, but is it so with reference to the mercantile community of Australia? I think it is, for the simple reason that the mercantile community of Australia are not yet interested in the transfer of their commercial transactions from lines and grooves already established. My own inquiries lead me to assert positively that a very great deal of ignorance prevails in Australia of the wants and capabilities of India. I am told so by leading commercial men in Melbourne; I am told so by those gentlemen from India who have had better opportunities than I have of testing the condition of the Melbourne and Sydney markets—I refer to Mr. Sibthorpe and Mr. Inglis, my fellow commissioners. I am told so by the statistics of the Indian and Australian Blue-books, which amply testify to the meagreness of commercial relations between the two countries. But, it may be argued, these facts and these statistics merely indicate that more convenient lines of trade are established by Australia elsewhere. I venture to doubt the truth of such a deduction. I believe that Australia, in its earliest youth, falling back, as it naturally would, upon the mother-country for all material requirements which Great Britain could satisfy, and subsequently indenting upon China for a supply of tea, has formed

commercial grooves in those directions, inside which the course of great sections of its trade has hitherto run, and beyond which it has been almost too great a risk for any individual member of the community to travel, notwithstanding the possible advantages (inquiry into which he dare not stop to make) that may ultimately accrue from a divergence. Under this view, it seems to become the eminent duty of the administrative section of both systems of colonies to inquire whether political interests may not be concerned in a closer connection of commercial relations, and, if so, to encourage and facilitate the action of commercial men in its formation. To India the importance of obtaining one of the largest customers in the world (which Australia may at no distant period become) for her tea, spices, and other tropical or semi-tropical produce, would be enhanced by the provision of a system of communication which would throw into it a supply of food or munitions in times of emergency. But the main advantages would be the aid rendered to financial administration in various forms, which I need not now discuss. To Australia would be gained a purchasing country throughout which an enormous machinery exists interested in the promotion of a return trade from Australia, which (as pointed out in article in the *Age* newspaper of this day) can in time expect to supply to India everything that Europe now supplies. In other countries from which Australia now draws tropical supplies there is either a Government (as in China) hostile to European commerce, or (as in Java) with a strong prejudice in favour of its own mother-country. It is also to be remembered that in the not impossible event of a maritime

war in the Eastern seas—*Firstly*, the whole support of the Indian Government would be exerted in protection of Indo-Australian trading lines; *Secondly*, Indian ports would always be open to Australia, while those of China and other foreign countries might, in some eventualities, be closed. Since, therefore, it is very easy to prove that whatever China can produce, so can North India, and whatever Java and other foreign settlements in the tropics can supply, so can South India, Ceylon, and the Straits; it appears to be the plain absolute duty of Governments to incite whatever divergence is possible in the direction of India, and it may be feared that every day's delay in so doing will find in the commercial community more and more hesitation in breaking up the lines into which the first accidents of communication have laid them. Java has, as we all know, made successful exertions to establish a cheap line of communication between herself and Australia, and is quietly assuming a large share of the tropical business done for Australia—a share which will rapidly increase with the development of North Australia, prominent examples in support of which statements are:—1. That in 1878 she sent ten times as much tea to Melbourne as India and Ceylon put together. 2. That she sent spices of more value than from any quarter, except London. 3. That in sugar her exports to Melbourne were far ahead of any country, except the Mauritius (Ceylon and India not even competing).

So, again, we find that China sent 6,000,000lbs. of tea direct, and 1,500,000 more *vid* Sydney, against 6,000 from India and Ceylon respectively, and that in the wake of the tea have naturally followed other commodities,

such as silk goods, mats, &c., with opium, and the Chinamen who eat it. (I may note, in parenthesis, that if the colonies of North Australia would prefer to foreigners from China, British subjects from India, she could send any amount of that excellent coolie labor which has made the fortunes of Demerara and Mauritius planters).

On the other hand, what did China and Java take while the former sent to Victoria more than half a million sterling worth of goods? She only took to the value of £352, and although she was a better customer to New South Wales, yet her only promises of importance were in coal and dried fish, a greatly extended trade in which articles is unlikely; Dutch possessions sending more than a quarter of a million, took less than £20,000 worth. Now, what I wish to insist upon is, that no efforts on the part of Australia are likely to increase the demand for colonial goods in China and Java, whereas they can obtain every assistance in India for the exportation of Australian produce. In this respect, indeed, India may be to Australia a better customer than even England, who can get a great deal that she wants in agricultural and pastoral produce more cheaply from America. I now adduce one of two examples which indicate the necessity of an inquiring agency and administrative action:—1. The jute trade with Calcutta is one of those branches of commerce which seems to the well established; and yet, on showing samples of Indian manufacture in Melbourne, I find, on the authority of one of the largest wholesale importing houses, that certain sections of jute goods are not sent from India at all, and that the Indian samples only require certain simple modifications in width and texture to make them as well suited to the

Australian market as the English imports. Now, it is clear that it only requires a little persistent inquiry to ascertain such facts as these, that it ought only to require communication of them to Indian exporters to induce the export of the required article from Calcutta or Bombay. 2. North India is one of the greatest producers of linseed in the world, and is actually looking for consumers who will buy the oil and leave her the cake, which latter is so greatly needed by her half-starved cattle. What happens now is that England buys the oil seed, keeps the cake, and sends a considerable quantity of expressed oil to Australia. A little persistent action on the part of administrative authorities, extending, if necessary, to the subsidy of a pioneering enterprise in the establishment of oil mills, ought to succeed in sending oil to Australia as cheaply as England. 3. The Bombay weaving and spinning mills are manufacturing large quantities of goods which in many cases are only unsaleable in Australia, because they have not attempted to suit their patterns to Australian requirements. In those few cases where the patterns are right, I have found on the authority of wholesale houses that prices are well within the mark. A little persistent correspondence conducted through a recognised agency ought, therefore, to lead to the supply from Bombay of the patterns required and to an extended trade in them.

Such are examples which could easily be multiplied (of which Mr. O'Conor has a further list) of new openings which may be made for imports from India. There is more immediate difficulty in increasing exports to Australia, but a very large increase can, if the wants of India are watched, be gradually effected, and made to follow the

rapidly rising civilisation and removal of prejudices to foreign articles of consumption which now exist. At present no attempt is made in Australia to study these possible openings. Little appreciation exists here of the great need that the European population and army in India has of good meat and good dairy produce throughout the greater part of the year (when it is too hot for suitable food to be grown for cattle), or of the great extent to which the native population consume fruit ; so much so that immense quantities are yearly brought down from the mountainous regions of Afghanistan on camel-back at quite as great (if not greater) a cost as would carry better fruits across the seas from Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Port Darwin or Hobart. There are more than 200,000,000 of fruit-eaters in India. The hop-growers of Victoria and Tasmania were unaware of the establishment of large breweries along the Himalayan ranges for the supply of beer to British troops and residents in India, and that Britain and Germany are now competing for the supply of hops, which there seems reason to believe can be sent of better quality from the colonies.

These examples are, for the present, sufficient to indicate that some agency is undoubtedly required to link together the two strands which, when tied, will form the bond between India and Australia, and that there is an actual necessity that those practical enquiries should (for a limited period) be continued, which we, Exhibition commissioners, can only hope to commence. A vast amount of information as to the character of Australian products has been collected and published, in some cases in a very interesting form, by the representatives

here of Australian colonies, and it is due to them, as well as the promoters of this Exhibition, that their labor should not be in vain. India is, as regards Australasia, cosmopolitan, and wishes to have reciprocal dealings with all the colonies of which Australasia (regarded by her as one empire) is composed; but as it happens that the wants and capabilities of each Australian colony are not identical, it does not appear to me that practical investigation can be confined to Melbourne alone, but that whatever official action may be taken, should be extended to the development of Indo-Australian commerce throughout the whole group of colonies.

Three courses have been suggested:—The appointment of one agent of commercial experience who shall make enquiries on behalf of all British colonies, both north and south of the equator, and who shall keep himself in constant communication with "experts" in every branch of commerce.

2. The appointment of one agent for each colony.

3. The establishment of an Indo-Australian trading company, with branches at the capital of each colony, through which Government might, if necessary, subsidise pioneering enterprise. This was recommended by Mr. Inglis.

Whatever form of action may recommend itself, it must be accompanied by the proviso, that administrative action must be withdrawn as soon as extended commercial relations have been fairly well established, or have been proved to be impossible.

It is quite fair to quote the history of the Calcutta Tea Syndicate as an immediate example of the practical re-

sults of practical action taken by administrative authorities under the guidance of experts. In this case the Government of India, having appealed to the Chamber of Commerce in Calcutta, whether some practical action could not be taken, discussion ensued among the commercial men of Calcutta, which led to the formation of a representative syndicate, who nominated a special commissioner for this Exhibition, and obtained the active support of the Indian Government (by subsidies and general co-operation) in this attempt to launch an Indo-Australian tea trade. I believe that Mr. Sibthorpe can tell you that it is already launched and preparing for full sail. Now I wish specially to note that in this instance the mercantile men of Calcutta co-operated with Government in assuming administrative functions, from which (in accordance with the rule upon which I have so much insisted) they intend to withdraw as soon as the trade is thoroughly established.

Does not the success which has in this case attended the administrative action of mercantile men in Calcutta and the Government of India, in taking advantage of the grand opportunity afforded by the Melbourne Government of a huge advertisement in this Exhibition, offer a strong lead in favor of similar action being taken by "experts" in conjunction with Government for the furtherance of other branches of Indo-Australian commerce, business in which will now more easily follow in the wake of an important tea trade than could perhaps have been independently floated?

A few words in conclusion on the subject of communications. I have heard many complaints that high rates of freight tend to prevent extended commercial relations,

and I believe that the complaints are not unfounded; but I am assured, on the other hand, by those who are intimately connected with the shipping trade, that accommodation at reasonable prices can always be obtained if there be a sufficient quantity of goods to be carried. I believe, however, that the question of encouraging extended communication between Sydney, the Straits, Ceylon, and Calcutta *viâ* the Torres Straits (advocated so strongly by Mr. Inglis) should receive very serious consideration; for if it be true that ships are found for freights, so it is also to some extent true that freights are found for ships: and if North Australia can work up a coal and copper trade with South India, she can easily obtain goods enough to bring back. Copper so largely used by the native population of India is now sent partly as ballast of woolships from Australia *viâ* Great Britain to India. Would it not be possible for Queensland to send it direct, if the trade with Australia were more generously encouraged by the extending of steam communication from Calcutta to Sydney? These questions, however, I do not wish to place before the present meeting for full discussion, but refer to them only as an indication of the necessity of national inquiry on these subjects. The resolutions which I now desire to propose are:—

"1. That this meeting should express its belief that some form of agency is required during a limited period for the further promotion of commercial relations between India and Australia.

"2. That a subsequent meeting should be held, at which the views of the representatives of the colonies concerned, and, if they are willing to give it, of the Victorian Chamber of Commerce, should be brought forward."

Mr. O'Conor (India), mentioned the following as some of the articles in which an enormous trade could be carried on with the colonies :—Carpeting, drugget, coffee, cordage, grain, coir, cotton-piece-goods, hosiery, raw cotton, drugs, Peruvian bark, fibrous material, pepper and all spices, gums, resin, mats, oils, tobacco, and cigars ; pickles, preserves, jams, jellies, and various others. He was not so sanguine with respect to the trade with Australia, but he anticipated that a large quantity of goods, such as blankets, woollens, flour, jams and preserves, copper, lead, tin, agricultural machines, candles, soap, and colonial wines, and timber for sleepers, would be purchased by the Indian people.

Mr. Fergusson, (Ceylon) supported the propositions contained in the paper which had been read, and said he attached much importance to the freezing process by which meat and other provisions could be conveyed from Australia to Ceylon, for the consumption not only of the white inhabitants, but also of the black population who were rapidly becoming Christians, and were abondoning their prejudices against meat. In that alone a large trade could be done. For Australian horses there was always a good demand.

Major Clementi (Straits Settlement,) thought that the export of Australian meat to India was rather chimerical, as the expense attending it would be too great to allow of it being conducted with any profit. He considered that a general agency should be established for the introduction of Indian commodities into Australia, and if that were done good results might be anticipated.

Mr. George Collins Levey (Victoria,) advocated the establishment of a commercial treaty with India under

the Act passed by the Imperial Parliament which allowed the colonies to impose differential duties upon the products of another.

Mr. R. J. Jeffray (Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce) supported the suggestions of Mr. Buck, and promised the hearty co-operation of that institution.

Dr. Agnew (of Tasmania,) mentioned that an exhibit of hams and bacon from that colony had been purchased for Ceylon, at 9*d.* for the ham, and 8*d.* for bacon, delivered at the wharf at Launceston, and he had been informed that if the price was not increased, a monthly order would be forthcoming. He mentioned that fact to indicate the trade that might be developed between Australasia and the East.

The resolutions were carried, and votes of thanks to Mr. Buck and Sir Herbert Sandford concluded the proceedings.

EXTENSION OF THE PARCEL POST SYSTEM TO AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.

The introduction into the Colonies of Australia and New Zealand of the parcel-post system, which has worked so well in India and between India and the United Kingdom and some of the Continental States, was attempted in 1877 by the Government of India through the Director-General of the Post Office, but the negotiation was unsuccessful. The subject has been taken up by the Committee, who placed it in full detail

before the Colonial Chambers of Commerce, in the belief that the extension of the system would be attended with much mutual advantage and convenience, and it will be satisfactory if their representation results in securing that object.

From Chamber to all Colonial Chambers.

Calcutta, 29th July 1880.

It has been represented to the Committee of this Chamber that mutual conveniences and advantages would follow the establishment of a system by which parcels could be transmitted from India to Australia and New Zealand, and *vice versâ*, through the agency of the Post Office, and that endeavours should be made to secure facilities for the interchange of articles between this country and the Colonies; and I am directed to submit the matter for the consideration of your Chamber.

At present the only means of sending or receiving small packages is by letter post, and the cost is so great as to deter that freer and more general interchange which would no doubt take place were there a less expensive method of transmission; and it has been urged that if easy means were afforded for the interchange of samples of merchandise and articles of trade and domestic use of limited value, much benefit would be gained by the commercial and general communities of both countries.

The Overland Parcel Post between India and the United Kingdom has been greatly developed since its establishment in 1873, and the extension of the system to foreign Europe has been attended with considerable

success; and it is believed that an inter-colonial arrangement, similar to that which exists between India and Great Britain and many of the countries in Europe, would not fail to accomplish results of material advantage.

Endeavours have been made by the Government of India, through the Director-General of the Post Office, to introduce the Parcel Post System into the several administrations in Australia and New Zealand, but the latter do not as yet appear prepared to enter into negotiations for its establishment.

The Committee of this Chamber, while regretting the unsuccessful issue of the Director-General's correspondence, are not without hope that the results desired may be obtained if the representatives of commercial interests in all the Colonies placed themselves in communication with their local authorities on the subject, and urged the adoption of a scheme which has been successful in other directions.

I have just received from the Director-General of the Post Office the accompanying printed Memorandum upon the Indian Parcel Post System, which may be useful to your Chamber in considering the subject of the representation I have now the pleasure to submit.

MEMORANDUM UPON THE INDIAN PARCEL POST SYSTEM.

India (including the territories of Ceylon and the Straits, which were formerly connected with the Indian Administration) is, it is believed, the only British dependency which has developed a regular parcel-post system. This system has for many years been in force in the inland

service of the country, and more recently it has been introduced, wherever practicable, in the foreign postal service. In this memorandum a brief description of the system in both aspects (inland and foreign) will be given.

INLAND PARCEL POST.

2. In the inland service parcels were originally conveyed at a postage rate varying in proportion to the distance traversed, but this troublesome system was subsequently abandoned in favour of the more simple plan of fixing the postage rate irrespective of distance: parcels are now conveyed by the inland service to any part of British India under the following rates and conditions:—

For a parcel not exceeding 40 tolas in weight *(about 1lb.)*	8 *annas* *(about 10d.)*	*Maximum weight* 2,000 tolas *(about 50lbs.)*	No parcel may be of a kind which, owing to size, shape, packing or otherwise, cannot be carried without serious inconvenience to the mail service or risk of injury to itself.
For every additional 40 tolas or fraction thereof.	4 *annas* *(about 5d.)*		

It is in contemplation to reduce, at an early date, the maximum rate to 4 annas (about 5*d.*) for a parcel not exceeding 20 tolas (about ½lb.) in weight.

3. The figures given in the margin show the development of the inland parcel post. The comparatively rapid extension of the railway system in India of late years has not lessened the use made by the public of the Post Office for the transmission of parcels; for though the railway administrations offer facilities for parcel traffic, the advantages presented by the Post Office in respect of posting,

Year.	Number of inland parcels.
1853-54	296,000
1863-64	556,000
1873-74	605,000
1874-75	792,000
1875-76	851,000
1876-77	990,000
1877-78	909,000
1878-79	998,000
1879-80	1,061,000

delivery, insurance, &c., serve to maintain the preference for transit through the Post Office, in respect of the smaller class of parcels to which the postal system is confined.

4. The Indian Post Office has arrangements with the different railway administrations, under which it secures certain carrying space in each mail train commensurate with the demands for letter and parcel conveyance: this accommodation is paid for in almost all cases.

5. The transit of parcels is generally slower than that of letters, for on railway lines no attempt is made to sort parcels during transit. Parcel-sorting offices have been established at certain convenient points on the railway lines (about 300 or 400 miles distant from each other), where the parcels are taken out of the train to be sorted and sent on by the next train. The object of this arrangement is to save the expense of sorting during transit, as in the case of letters and newspapers. On road lines also the parcels are commonly carried at somewhat less speed, with a view to lessening the expense. A parcel travelling from Calcutta to Peshawar (about 1,500 miles) would lose some three days in transit, as compared with the letter mail.

6. The delivery of parcels is generally arranged so as to interfere as little as possible with the delivery of important letter mails.

7. In 1877 a system was introduced under which the sender of a parcel could declare its value to the Post Office for realization from the addresee: this system is called the "value-payable" system. The Post Office on delivery of a "value-payable" parcel claims from the ad-

dressee the declared value, and subsequently pays over that value to the sender, after deducting from it the Post Office commission. The rate of this commission is at present about 2 per cent. upon the declared value; but it is intended shortly to reduce it to 1 per cent. The "value-payable" system began in December 1877 in a very small way; but it has considerably increased, as will be seen from the following figures:—

Year.	Number of parcels.	Value declared for realization.	Commission.
		Rs.	Rs.
1878-79	7,408	1,32,109	3,942
Approximate equivalent at 1s. 8d. *per rupee.*	...	£ 11,000	£ 330
		Rs.	Rs.
1879-80	26,035	3,46,330	11,395
Approximate equivalent at 1s. 8d. *per rupee.*	...	£ 28,860	£ 950

8. About the same time (*i.e.*, at the beginning of the year 1878) another system was introduced by which the Post Office insured parcels (as well as letters), entrusted to it for transmission by post, against loss in transit. The present scale of insurance fees represents about ¼ per cent. upon the insured value. The following figures shew the rapid development of the insurance system:—

Year.	Value Insured.			Insurance fees.
	Letters.	Parcels.	Total.	
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1878-89	89,71,775	2,81,21,219	3,70,92,994	1,23,556
	£	£	£	£
Approximate equivalent at 1s. 8d. *per rupee.*	747,650	2,343,440	3,091,080	10,300
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1879-80	1,63,31,968	5,34,34,055	6,97,66,023	1,97,780
	£	£	£	£
Approximate equivalent at 1s. 8d. *per rupee.*	1,361,000	4,452,840	5,813,840	16,480

FOREIGN PARCEL POST.

9. In March 1873 the foreign parcel-post system was introduced in India. At first it was confined to an exchange of parcels between India and the United Kingdom, but subsequently it was extended to parcel-post exchanges with the following countries, *viz.*,—

Austria—Hungary.	France.	Straits Settlements.
Belgium.	Germany.	Sweden.
Ceylon.	Holland.	Switzerland.
Denmark.	Norway.	

10. The main revenue from the foreign parcel-post system is derived from the exchange with the United Kingdom. The British Post Office found itself unable to take any part in parcel-post transactions, and arrangements were consequently made with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company's Office in London, under which that Company became not only the carriers by sea but also the collecting and delivering agents of the Indian Post Office in the United Kingdom. In the case of other foreign countries, the Post Office of Austria (Trieste) is the medium of exchange with India.

11. The statistics given below, for the period during which the foreign parcel-post has been established, show rapid development:—

Year.	Parcel exchange.	Despatch. Number of parcels.	Receipt. Number of parcels.	Observations.
1873-74 ...	United Kingdom ...	8,589	13,334	
	Foreign Countries ...	...	...	
1874-75 ...	United Kingdom ...	9,443	16,120	
	Foreign Countries ...	...	..	
1875-76 ...	United Kingdom ...	12,000	22,690	
	Foreign Countries ...	648	481	
1876-77 ...	United Kingdom ...	15,159	27,547	
	Foreign Countries ...	1,583	1,036	
1877-78 ...	United Kingdom	17,164	38,389	
	Foreign Countries ...	2,165	936	
1878-79 ...	United Kingdom ...	18,968	46,369	
	Foreign Countries ...	2,964	1,233	
1879-80 ...	United Kingdom ...	19,134	48,610	
	Foreign Countries ...	3,192*	1,486*	*Approximate

12. The average weight of the parcels mentioned in the preceding paragraph is about 2½lbs. on the homeward route, and about 5½ lbs. on the outward route.

13. The postage rate for foreign parcels despatched from India is uniformly 8 annas (about 10*d.*) per pound (prepayment compulsory); the weight is limited to 50lbs.; and no parcel may exceed 2 feet in length by 1 foot in breadth or depth, or contain opium, liquids or substances

of a damaging, dangerous, or offensive nature. In the case of parcels addressed to the United Kingdom the value is limited to £50. The value of parcels containing valuables addressed to Ceylon is likewise limited to £50.

14. The rate charged in other countries for the transmission of foreign parcels to India is about 1*s.* per pound, but book parcels forwarded from the United Kingdom to India are charged half rates only, *i.e.*, 6*d.* per pound.

15. In all cases a declaration of the value and contents of each parcel has to be furnished by the sender, along with the parcel, for the inspection of the Customs Department of the receiving country: a few parcels are opened by way of test (and securely reclosed under the Custom-house seal), but the great bulk are passed on the declarations received with them. Any Customs duty which may be chargeable is marked on the parcel by the Custom-house authorities (who attend at the Post Office for that purpose) and is levied, together with any postage which may be due, from the addressee on delivery of the parcel.

GENERAL REMARKS.

16. The preceding paragraphs shew that thus far the parcel-post system in India has proved a convenience to the public: and it is hoped that in course of time the system may be extended in connection with other countries. An attempt was made in this direction in 1877, when the Post Offices of the Australasian colonies, Hong-Kong and the Straits Settlements were invited to join in an arrangement with this country for the exchange of parcels, but the negotiations were successful only in the case of the Straits Settlements. One of the main objec-

tions urged by the Australasian colonies was the difficulty of carriage in the interior.

17. The Indian Post Office would gladly avail itself of any opening for the resumption of negotiations for parcel-post exchanges with the Australasian colonies. Fresh negotiations are being commenced with those colonies in respect of Money Order exchanges; and it is possible that the opportunity may yet come for a similar resumption of negotiations for the exchange of parcels.

SIMLA;
The 30th June 1880.

L. G. WAIT,
Offg. Asst. to the Director-Genl. of the Post Office of India.

THE ADMINISTRATOR-GENERAL'S ACT.

Section 56 of the Administrator-General's Act—II of 1874—prohibits any person other than the Administrator-General from receiving any remuneration for services rendered as executor or administrator under probate or letters of administration, and this provision of the Act was the subject of a memorial addressed to the Governor-General in Council a few months since by firms and others who were affected by it; but His Excellency was unable to comply with the prayer of the petitioners.

At the instance of the Madras Chamber of Commerce, the Committee reconsidered this question, which had engaged attention many years

ago, and, conditional on the movement being a combined one and supported by the Chambers of the three Presidencies, they were prepared to submit a representation to Government, but the Bombay Chamber decided not to co-operate, as the matter did not seem to them to be one in which mercantile interests were involved, and the proposed action of the Committee was accordingly abandoned.

From Madras Chamber to Chamber.

Madras, 7th August 1880.

I am directed by the Chamber to ask you to be so good as to state whether it is the intention of your Chamber to take any, and what, action with regard to the refusal of the Government of India to comply with the prayer of the Calcutta memorial on the subject of Section 56 of the Administrator-General's Act No. II of 1874.

A copy of the letter that was addressed by the Government of India on the 18th May to Messers Roberts, Morgan & Co., on the subject was communicated to this Chamber, and it is observed with regret that the Governor-General in Council contends that the law prohibits any person, other than the Administrator-General in his official capacity, from receiving any remuneration for doing any thing as executor, or administrator under any probate or letters of administration.

This Chamber continue to think that if a man voluntarily appoints an executor and gives him what he considers a fair remuneration for carrying out the provisions of his

will it is not, or it should not be, competent to any Government to step in and say that such man's wishes shall be set aside, and that the work shall be done by the private executor for nothing, or by the official administrator for a definite charge. It must often happen that the friends of a deceased man have good reason to believe that his estate will be realised more advantageously by private than by official agency, and in such case they would naturally prefer to pay a fair remuneration for the work in order to enlist the services of such private agency. But the Government would seem to hold that it is reasonable that they should exercise the right to say that the friends of the deceased person must either engage that private agency for nothing, or pay an official twice the commission which would be thought sufficiently remunerative by a private administrator for the work. This seems to the Chamber so unreasonable an infringement of private liberty and so inexpedient an attempt to bring business to the official referred to, that the Chamber will be glad to hear that your Chamber contemplate memorialising the Secretary of State for redress.

Calcutta, 10th September 1880.

I am instructed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th of last month, inquiring if it is the intention of this Chamber to take any action consequent on the refusal of the Viceroy and Governor-General to comply with the prayer of a memorial addressed to His Excellency on the subject of administrations to Indian Estates and specially with reference to the 56th Section of the Administrator-General's Act No. 2 of 1874.

The Committee of this Chamber direct me to say that Messers. Roberts, Morgan & Co., have been so good as to furnish them with copies of the memorial and reply referred to, and that these documents have come before them for the first time, as they had no previous official knowledge of the movement in question, which appears to have originated with a limited number of persons affected by the prohibitive provisions of the Section appealed against.

The subject of your reference will have the Committee's attention; but I am directed to point out that the most urgent representations were simultaneously made some years ago by the Chambers of the three Presidencies against such provisions of the Act then in force as were calculated to prejudice the interests of estates, and especially the rights of non-official executors and administrators who were barred by statute from receiving any remuneration for their services in those capacities.

The obnoxious clauses were retained nevertheless; and the Administrator-General's Act of 1874 is the survivor of the various repealed Acts since 1849.

On a review of the previous representations of all the Chambers and of the carefully prepared memorial now before them, it appears to the Committee that the subject has been dealt with in the most exhaustive manner; that it would be difficult to employ stronger or more cogent arguments in support of the views submitted for the consideration of Government; and that the recent answer to the memorialists leaves scarcely any room for hope that any renewed appeal will meet with success.

The only ground upon which the Committee think they may take action concurrently with your own Chamber

and that of Bombay is that the memorial proceeded from a comparatively small number of persons interested in a matter which concerns not only themselves but the community generally, and that a combined movement on the part of all the Chambers may possibly have greater weight and influence.

Viewing it in this light the Committee are therefore of opinion that the co-operation of the Chambers at Madras and Bombay is essential, and if an approval of this course is expressed the Committee will undertake to draw up an appeal for consideration and subsequent submission to the Government, either as a joint or several representation of the three Chambers as may be hereafter decided upon.

Madras, 4th October 1880.

In reply to your letter of the 10th ultimo which I have laid before this Chamber, I am directed to say that this Chamber will be happy to co-operate in a joint representation to the Government of India on the subject of administration of Indian estates, and especially with reference to the 56 section of the Administrator-General's Act of 1874.

From Chamber to Bombay Chamber.

Calcutta, 13th September 1880.

The provision of the Administrator-General's Act No. 2 of 1874, section 56, which prohibits private or non-official administrators or executors from charging commission for their services was the subject of a memorial addressed, in July of last year, to the Viceroy and Gover-

nor-General by some agency houses and others interested in the question, but His Excellency was unable to comply with the application to amend the law in that respect.

The Madras Chamber has lately referred the matter to us, inquiring if we are prepared to take any action consequent on the decision arrived at, and I am directed to place before your Chamber copy of that reference and of our answer (hereto attached) as well as of the memorial and the reply, which will reach you under separate cover.

When the draft of an Act to amend the law of 1849 relating to the office and duties of Administrator-General was published in 1853, the Committee of this Chamber submitted a very earnest protest against the injustice of depriving non-official representatives of deceased persons of the right which they had, prior to the Act of 1849, equally with the Ecclesiastical Registrar of the Supreme Court, of charging commission on the assets of estates passing into their hands, and the Bombay and Madras Chambers also addressed the Government in very strong remonstrances against the proposed measure, which was adopted notwithstanding all that had been urged against it.

The memorial under submission is substantially a renewal of the appeal then made; and as its prayer has been so recently rejected the question arises whether any action on the part of the Bombay and Madras and Bengal Chambers should be taken; and the Committee will be glad to be favored with the views of your Chamber on the subject.

Bombay, 4th October 1880.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th ultimo on the subject of the provision of the Administrator-General's Act No. 2 of 1874 section 56 which prohibits private or non-official administrators or executors from charging commission for their sevices, and enquiring whether this Chamber would be willing to co-operate with the Bengal and Madras Chambers in taking any action consequent on the refusal of the Viceroy and Governor-General to amend the law in that respect.

In reply the Committee desire me to state that the question had already been brought before this Chamber and that they decided not to move in it, as the matter did not seem to them to be one in which mercantile interests were involved.

From Chamber to Madras Chamber.

Calcutta, 30th October 1880.

Simultaneously with the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant the Committee of this Chamber were in possession of the reply from the Bombay Chamber, who wrote to say that they decided not to move in the matter of the Administrator-General's Act, as it did not seem to them to be one in which mercantile interests were involved.

This determination on the part of the Bombay Chamber materially modifies the condition upon which my Committee expressed their willingness to make a joint representation to Government; and in the absence of combined action on the part of all the Presidency Chambers

they are of opinion that it is not expedient to address the Government on the subject.

The Committee have come to this conclusion, however, with less reluctance, as they are informed that the original memorialists are making efforts, through their London correspondents, with the view of obtaining from the Secretary of State a reversal of the Resolution arrived at by the Governor-General in Council.

UNIFORM TONNAGE SCALE FOR ALL INDIAN PORTS.

The Committee hesitate to bring this subject forward for the consideration of the Chamber. The existing scale is the result of a compromise after much discussion; and as apparently no inconvenience is experienced by those using it, no good object seemed likely to be gained by amendments. Upon one point only the Committee feel that some alteration is desirable. According to the Chamber's Schedule a ton of jute, cotton, &c. is 50 cubic feet, whereas by general custom and agreement the ton of such cargo is 5 bales not exceeding 52 cubic feet. The Committee think the Schedule should be amended to follow the custom.

From Bombay Chamber to Chamber.

Bombay, 27th August 1880.

The Committee of this Chamber desire me to invite the attention of your Chamber to the correspondence which

passed between the two Chambers in February and March last year, on the subject of a uniform tonnage scale for all India, and to ask you if your Committee would now be prepared to join in a movement for the introduction of such a scheme.

The tonnage scale adopted by this Chamber is, as stated in my letter of the 11th February 1879, on the basis of 40 cubic feet and 16 cwt. dead weight to the ton for steamers, and 50 cubic feet and 20 cwt. for ships: at Kurrachee the scale is on a similar basis. The scale, however, at your port is on a different system, as are likewise the scales at Madras, Ceylon, Cochin, and other ports. It is obvious that a uniform scale for all India and Ceylon would carry with it many advantages to shipping interests as well as to shippers.

The Committee of this Chamber were glad to learn that you agreed in considering a uniform scale for all India desirable, and they venture to hope that your Committee may now be prepared to take up the question.

Calcutta, 6th September 1880.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th ultimo, relative to the introduction of a tonnage scale for all India, and enquiring if the Committee of this Chamber are now prepared to join in a movement for the introduction of such a scheme.

You point out that the scale at the ports of Bombay and Kurrachee is on the basis of 40 cubic feet and 16 cwt. dead weight to the ton for steamers, and 50 feet and 20 cwt. for ships, but that at Calcutta, Madras, Ceylon, Cochin and other ports the system is different, and that it

would be advantageous to the interests of shipping and of shippers if a uniform scale for all India and Ceylon were adopted.

In replying to your favor of the 11th February of last year, in which you represented the desirability of uniformity of practice at all Indian ports, the Committee of this Chamber, while agreeing with yours in this respect, regretted their inability to re-open a question which had been recently settled; and their subsequent experience of the working of the system as it prevails here does not encourage them to disturb it.

They admit the unscientific character of the Calcutta schedule, and that advantages may probably result from an assimilation of the scales in force in all ports; but, notwithstanding its acknowledged imperfection, the system is so well understood by shippers and the shipping visiting this port, that no inconvenience has been experienced or complained of, nor do the Committee apprehend any from its continuance.

The Committee, therefore, do not find themselves in a position to respond, as you would desire, to the invitation you have been good enough to offer.

EXCESSIVE ASSESSMENT OF PRESSING COMPANIES FOR LICENSE TAX.

The very heavy and unequal incidence of the License tax on the Pressing Companies in this city and neighbourhood, sought to be enforced by the Calcutta and Suburban Municipalities, was brought under the Committee's notice, and

the undernoted representation to the Government of Bengal was put forward in support of the petition of the agents and secretaries of these Companies. Although no decision has been announced it is understood that an equitable, adjustment is intended to be made, and that the inequalities complained of in the assessments will be removed.

From Chamber to Private Secretary to the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

Calcutta, 14th June 1880.

I am directed by the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to forward the enclosed petition addressed to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor by various Agents and Secretaries of Pressing Companies relative to the excessive assessment for license-tax levied by the Calcutta and suburban municipalities.

The case is so fully detailed in the petition that the Committee can do little more than express the hope that His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor will give the matter the consideration it deserves, in order that the present unequal incidence of the tax be removed, and that, in future, the fee be assessed on a sounder basis, such as is laid down in the Act of 1879 referred to.

Copy.

To

THE HON'BLE SIR ASHLEY EDEN, K.C.S.I.,C.I.E.,
Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

The Petition of the Press Companies of Calcutta and its Suburbs.

HUMBLY SHEWETH,

That your Petitioners have from time to time, between the years 1870-74, erected in and around Calcutta, presses worked by steam and hydraulic power, and have since carried on the business of pressing into bales jute, cotton, and other articles.

2. That until the year 1879 your Petitioners were assessed by the Calcutta and Suburban Municipalities in the uniform sum of Rupees 1,000—one thousand—per annum which they paid for the license to carry on such business; and that in the year 1879 the said Municipalities refunded to your Petitioners half of the sums so assessed for the year 1878-79.

3. That your Petitioners have recently received a demand from the said Municipality to pay the following sums:—

Chitpore Hydraulic Press Company	... Rs.	1,500
Calcutta Hydraulic Press Company	... „	1,600
River side Press Company	... „	2,000
Golabarry Press Company	... „	2,000
Nasmyth's Patent Press Company	... „	1,70(
The Strand Bank Press Company	... „	2,00(
Watson's Patent Press Company	... „	80(

which they have actually paid as License fees for th(year 1879-80 under Clause 5 of Act V. of 1879 Benga

Council. On receipt of the above demand your Petitioners separately waited on the Vice-Chairmen of the said Municipalities to represent that they had been assessed at an excessive rate and to appeal against the same, when they were informed that the assessments were made under orders of the Government of Bengal basis of a 10 per cent. rate on the value of the premises as assessed for house rate, and that there was no appeal.

4. That your Petitioners now lay their case before your Honor with a view to a re-consideration of the said basis of assessment.

5. That the 2nd Clause of Act V. 1879. B.C. says :—
"In fixing the amount of fee to be paid in respect of "any Jute Warehouse, the Local Government shall have "regard to the annual value thereof as it is for the time "assessed, to the payment of Municipal taxes, to the "size and position of the Jute Warehouse, to the number "and excellence of the pressing machines, erected or "proposed to be erected in such Jute Warehouse, and the "probable income derived from such Jute Warehouse "by its owner or occupier."

6. That your Petitioners respectfully submit that it is wrong in principle and contrary to the terms of the above clause of the Act, to select as the basis of assessment only one of the several considerations detailed above for the purpose of determining the amount of the License fee to be paid by each Press House, and that such method of assessment leads to great inconsistencies and inequalities in the incidence of this tax which the following table will show :—

	Capital.	No. of Presses.	Bales pressed in half-year July—Dec. 1879, about	Dividend declared for ½ year.	License Tax.
	Rs.				
Chitpore Hydraulic Press Company.	4,00,000	4	89,600	14%	1,500
Calcutta Hydraulic Press Company.	1,70,000	4	94,876	22%	1,600
Riverside Press Company.	2,70,000	4	74,325	10%	2,000
Nasmyth's Patent Press Company.	3,20,000	7	75,157	7½%	1,700
The Strand Bank Press Company.	2,50,000	4	77,000	16%	2,000
Watson's Patent Press Company.	3,00,000	4	55,000	16%	800
Golabarry Press Company.	£50,000	5	77,000	8%	2,000

7. That your Petitioners respectfully suggest that a more equitable basis for assessment as contemplated by the Act be adopted, that the excessive sum fixed for their license be reduced to a fair amount, and that the difference be ordered to be refunded.

And your Petitioners shall ever pray.

(Sd.) KETTLEWELL, BULLEN & Co., *Managing Agents, Chitpore Hydraulic Press Company, Ld.*

„ ROBERT & CHARRIOL, *Managing Agents, Calcutta Hydraulic Press Company, Ld.*

„ RUTHERFOORD & Co., *Agents, Riverside Press Company, Limited.*

„ RUSHTON BROTHERS, *Secretaries, Nasmyth's Patent Press Company, Limited.*

„ ERNSTHAUSEN & OESTERLEY, *Managing Agents and Secretaries, the Strand Bank Press Company, Limited.*

„ FINLAY, MUIR & Co., *Agents, Golabarry Press.*

CALCUTTA,
7th June 1880.

From Private Secretary to Chamber.

Darjeeling, 17*th June* 1880.

I am directed to inform you that the petition from the Agents and Secretaries of Pressing Companies forwarded with your letter of the 14th instant, has, by order of the Lieutenant-Governor, been transferred to the Bengal Office. You should apply to the Secretary to Government in the Financial Department for information as to the orders passed on the petition.

EXTENSION OF JAIL MANUFACTURES.

It was represented to the Committee that there seemed to be a tendency on the part of the Government of Bengal to increase in the Presidency jails the manufacture by machinery of certain articles which had hitherto been supplied almost entirely by free labour, and that this if persevered in would tell seriously on many local industries. The reply is satisfactory, as shewing that the Lieutenant-Governor has no intention of permitting the employment of convict labour to such an extent as to interfere with private manufacturers.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 2nd August 1880.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to lay before you a complaint which has been addressed to them on the subject of the extension of Jail manufactures.

The Committee feel the question to be one of some difficulty : it cannot be denied that it is the duty of Government to lessen, as far as it legitimately can, the cost of the maintenance of prisoners in the various jails, but at the same time the Committee would respectfully submit that the interference with free labor should be as small as possible.

If this be not kept carefully in view the result may be that many struggling industries may be threatened or even extinguished by the forced labor (working new machinery under skilled supervision) which Government command.

The Committee observe that the policy adopted by the Government of Bengal in 1874 is being more energetically carried on by the present Lieutenant-Governor, and the Administration Report for the current year records—" that Woollen Factory buildings in the Bhaugul-" pore Central Jail are nearly ready, and the machinery, " which arrived in India in December, is now being " erected. A Castor Oil Factory, on a large scale, has " been established at Rajshahye, and the Jail has for " some months been actively engaged in making oil for the " Northern Bengal State Railway and the Eastern Bengal " Railway. The manufacture of coir goods is now the

" only industry in the Midnapore Jail. The question of " the kind of machinery to be purchased for the Cotton " Factory at Buxar is still under consideration, and it is " proposed to start a Paper Factory at Hazáribagh."

This active trade on the part of the Jail authorities, it is feared, is likely to exceed the limit of what is justifiable ; and it is hoped that the Government will re-consider the position the Jail authorities are taking in this matter, and give such assurances as will restore the confidence of private manufacturers.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber,— No. 1652 *T. Darjeeling, the* 1*st October* 1880.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 2nd August last, submitting a representation from the Chamber of Commerce regarding the extension of Jail manufactures in Bengal.

2. In reply, I am to say that the Lieutenant-Governor is glad to find that the Chamber shares with him the view that it is the duty of Government to lessen, as far as it legitimately can, the burden which the maintenance of the convict population throws on the tax-payers of the province. The object of Government in introducing machinery into some of the Central Jails in Lower Bengal has been to enable it, whilst enforcing stricter penal labor, to utilize the labor of the convicts to the best advantage in manufacturing articles required for the public service, and especially by the convicts themselves, such as clothing, blankets, &c.

3. The Lieutenant-Governor is not aware of any industry now carried on at any Central Jail which is

open to the objection taken in the concluding portion of the 2nd para. of your letter under acknowledgment.

MOYAPORE POWDER MAGAZINE.

It appeared to the Committee that the proposal of the Port Commissioners in reference to the charge of Rs. 5 for boat hire on every vessel coming to the Port in order to meet the cost of maintaining the magazine, was an endeavour to indirectly increase the dues on vessels trading here. As it is, Calcutta is by far the most expensive of all Indian Ports, and in the Committee's opinion it is already unnecessarily costly. Experience elsewhere has shown the false policy of burdening with charges on shipping any. Port however great its natural or added facilities: and considering what is passing at other Indian Ports, but particularly at Bombay, the Committee hold that every proposal in the direction of additional charges should be scrutinised with the utmost jealousy. The Committee are glad to notice that the Lieutenant-Governor agreed with them in thinking that there was no sufficient ground for the levy of this fee.

Regarding the increased charges for storing and delivering powder, the Committee have no doubt that the Lieutenant-Governor has

satisfied himself that the increase is necessary to cover actual charges. At the same time they cannot but regret that the increase has been sanctioned without a corresponding reduction elsewhere being insisted upon. The revenue of the Port, taken as a whole, is far in excess of what is necessary to cover all possible expenditure. Indeed the Commissioners' report for the past year shows that, after providing for all contingencies, as well as for a sinking fund, calculated to extinguish within 30 years the cost of all works to date, a surplus of nearly 5 lakhs of rupees remained. This large sum has been spent upon new works and improvements, but the Committee, as they have already upon more than one occasion stated, consider that it should rather have been devoted to a reduction of current charges on trade. They strongly object to the present business of the Port being made to provide the capital required for works which are to benefit future generations.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.—

No. 72. *Calcutta the* 20*th May* 1880.

I am directed to forward herewith a note by the Vice-Chairman to the Port Commissioners, Calcutta, together with a Resolution passed at a Meeting of the Commissioners, held on the 25th March 1880, on the subject of

increasing the fees levied at the Moyapore Magazine, and to request that the Lieutenant-Governor may be favored with any remarks which the Chamber of Commerce may desire to offer on the proposals of the Port Commissioners.

The return of the papers forwarded herewith is requested with your reply.

Scale of Magazine fees revised.

Read following note by the Vice-Chairman on the receipts and expenditure of the Moyapore Magazine and suggesting an increased scale of fees on powder stored in the magazine:—

NOTE.

The receipts and expenditure on account of the Moyapore Magazine, as stated in the estimates for 1880-81, attracted the attention of the Budget Committee, and at their request I have to submit the following remarks for the information of the Commissioners.

The receipts for the past three years have been—

	Rs.
1876-77	5,859
1877-78	8,868
1878-79	5,044

For the current year the receipts will probably be about Rs. 3,500 only.

The expenditure on account of the Magazine has been as follows:—

Years.	Repairs.	Salaries.	Total.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1876-77	544	3,958	4,502
1877-78	356	4,056	4,412
1878-79	1,655	4,224	5,879

For 1879-80 the expenditure will probably be about Rs. 5,000.

The average income of the past four years may therefore be taken at Rs. 5,818, and the average expenditure at Rs. 4,948. To the expenditure on account of salaries and repairs should also be added interest at 4½ per cent. on Rs. 72,449, the amount at which the magazine premises stand in the valuation of property made over to the Port Commissioners in 1871. With this charge added the total annual expenditure on account of the magazine amounts to Rs. 8,208, against a revenue of Rs. 5,818.

Up to 1871 the only charges levied at the magazine were those payable on delivery of the consignments, the rates being as follows :—

Magazine fees payable on delivery—

	Rs.	A.	P.
On sporting powder ... ... lb	0	0	6
On blasting powder ... ... „	0	0	3

To these delivery fees the Commissioners in 1871, with the approval of Government, added the following godown charges :—

	Rs.	A.	P.
Magazine charge for godown rent on all packages of 25lb. and under per month or portion of month	0	1	0
Magazine charges for godown rent on all packages over 25lb. and not exceeding 50lb.	0	2	0
Magazine charges for godown rent on packages over 50lb.	0	4	0

These fees and godown rent charges are the only income of the magazine, and they amount to considerably less than the expenditure as has been shown above.

The expenditure was considerably increased soon after the Commissioners took charge of the port, in consequence of their providing powder-boats for the use of vessels passing the magazine. Up to 1872-73 vessels were allowed to keep 50lb. of powder on board while in port; and the fact that a ship which was on fire, and was afterwards sunk, was known to have had this quantity on board led the Commissioners to propose that all powder in

excess of 5lb. should be left at Moyapore; and to make the delay and inconvenience to vessels in putting out and taking on board their powder as little as possible, the Commissioners provided two station powder-boats, one of which is always manned and ready to wait on passing vessels. The addition to the expenditure was Rs. 1,436 in salaries alone, besides interest, repairs, and stores. It was, however, resolved at the time that no additional charge should be made to the shipping on account of these boats.

To supplement the present income, it is now suggested that the following increased scale of fees be submitted for the approval of Government:—

		Rs.	A.	P.
1.	Delivery order, sporting powder and ammunition, per lb.	0	0	6
2.	Delivery order, blasting powder or other explosive material	0	0	6
3.	Godown rent on all cases of powder and ammunition at the rate of one pie per lb. per mensem (*just* double present rate).			
4.	Boat fee for all vessels entering port payable for use of station-boat	5	0	0

This last charge is a new one altogether; but as the boats have been placed there for the convenience of passing vessels, and to save the delay and trouble which would be experienced if the masters had to use their own boats to take powder to or from the shore, a small fee of Rs. 5 for each voyage would not press unfairly.

If these rates are approved, the following is an approximate estimate of receipts based on the actuals of 1879-80.

The actual receipts for 1878-79 were as follow:—

	Rs.
Delivery fees	3,099
Godown rent	1,478

The number of vessels that entered port was 967.

In the following estimate the godown rent has been doubled, and the receipts from vessels estimated at Rs. 5 each from 950 vessels.

ESTIMATE FOR 1880-81.

Moyapore Magazine.

Receipts—

	Rs.
From delivery fees	3,000
„ godown rent	3,000
„ boat-fee against vessels	4,750
Total ...	10,750

Expenditure—

Salaries	4,250
Interest	3,260
Repairs	850
Depreciation of boats	400
Stores, &c.	5 0
Total ...	9,260

W. D. BRUCE,
Vice-Chairman.

Resolved;—That the revised scale of fees suggested in the foregoing note be approved and submitted for the approval of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor under the provisions of section 61 of Act XII. of 1875.

From Chamber to Govermnent of Bengal.

Calcutta, 5th June 1880.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 72 of the 20th ultimo, forwarding a memorandum by the Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners regarding the receipts and expenditure on account of the Powder

Magazine at Moyapore, and a Resolution thereon by the Commissioners approving of the revised scale of fees and submitting it for the sanction of the Lieutenant-Governor.

The memorandum sets forth that the fees hitherto levied do not meet the expenditure (which has been largely added to by including in the accounts a charge for interest on the amount at which the Magazine premises were taken over by the Commissioners), and with a view to remedy this it is proposed :—

(1) To increase the scale of delivery fees ; (2) to double the godown rent on powder stored ; and (3) to levy a fee of Rs. 5 on every vessel entering the port for the use of the boats provided for landing and re-shipping the powder.

The Committee instruct me to say that they see no objection to an increase in the charge for delivery fees, nor for extra rent on powder stored, provided such increase is really called for to meet the actual charges for its preservation and re-issue, but they do object to an extra fee upon all the vessels which enter this port, whether they use the Magazine or not, in order to cover an interest charge upon the estimated value of buildings which are part and parcel of the Port Estate. Such a charge would, they consider, be tantamount to an enhancement of the port dues.

It appears to the Committee that the Port Commissioners are able to justify their proposal for increased fees chiefly by including this interest charge in their account of the expenses of the Magazine ; but seeing that when the Port was made over to the Commissioners the charges which they were permitted to make were cal-

culated to be ample to meet the interest upon the value of the *whole* block surrendered to them by Government, as well as to provide for its efficient maintenance and for a sinking fund, and seeing also that the general current revenue of the Port has since not only done this but has enabled the Commissioners to execute large works of Port improvement (many of them of a nature which, in the Committee's opinion, should have entitled their being charged to Capital rather than to Revenue), they consider that the Port Commissioners cannot fairly claim to raise their charges in any particular Department whilst the aggregate of all the Port revenues are so ample if not excessive.

P.S.—The annexure to your letter is returned herewith as requested.

VALUATIONS OF STEEL FOR DUTY.

The tariff values of various kinds of imported steel having been found to be considerably in excess of actual market prices, the attention of Government has been drawn to the expediency of all descriptions of this metal being assessed for duty "*ad valorem.*"

From Chamber to Government of India.

Calcutta, 30th August 1880.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to represent that in addition to the classifications of steel which are liable to 5 per cent. duty on the tariff

values fixed by Notification No. 71C of 6th March 1880, there are several kinds imported of qualities somewhat better than common English steel, and which are described by manufacturers under various special names, such as *tool* steel and *Bessemer* steel, the present market values of which vary from 8 to 11 rupees per cwt.

A consignment of one of these qualities has lately been treated as cast steel by the Collector of Customs, who insisted on payment of duty on the tariff value of that quality, *viz.*, Rs. 21 per cwt., and, on appeal by the importer to the Board of Revenue, the Collector's decision has been confirmed.

Another similar description has, on several occasions, been treated as cast steel in the Custom House, although its value was only Rs. 9 per cwt.; but recently on a survey being held, the Collector has allowed an identical lot to be admitted under the lower rate for ordinary British steel, *viz.*, Rs. 7-8 per cwt.

Considering the varieties of steel imported into this market, and the variations of market values, and that it is expedient to protect not only the Customs revenue but the interests of merchants who contribute to it, the Committee submit that the present classification should be removed from the tariff, and duty levied "ad valorem," as the fairest and simplest means of adequately guarding the interests of all concerned.

INTER-COLONIAL CONFERENCE.

Dominion Board of Trade.

Montreal, Canada, 24th May 1880.

Referring to the annexed circular letter, which is a copy of one addressed to you in November 1878, the Executive Council of this Board have now to advise the progress they made towards the formation of the proposed Convention.

On the 12th day of March last, under the auspices of the *Association of Chambers of Commerce of Great Britain*, a meeting was held, attended by the Council of that Association, and by several representatives of Colonial interests, when the following Resolution was unanimously adopted :—

"That the proposed Conference be convened by the Dominion Board of Trade, and be held in London in the last week of February 1881."

It was suggested that invitations should be issued as follows :—

GREAT BRITAIN.	DELEGATES.
Association of Chambers of Commerce...	25
City of London ...	8
Manchester Chamber of Commerce ...	2
Liverpool ...	2
Glasgow ...	2
Chamber of Shipping	3
Chambers of Agriculture ...	6
	48

COLONIES.	DELEGATES.
Dominion Board of Trade ...	10
Queensland ...	2
Newfoundland ...	2
Adelaide ...	3
Victoria ...	3
New South Wales ...	3
Cape Town ...	2
Port Elizabeth ...	2
Natal ...	2
West India Islands ...	6
New Zealand ...	4
Tasmania ...	2
Singapore ...	2
Ceylon ...	3
Calcutta ...	3
Bombay ...	
Madras ...	3
	55

It was understood that preliminary to the Meeting the Dominion Board of Trade should send out propositions to each body invited, stating the objects which they wished the Conference to accomplish, and also inviting resolutions from them to be discussed at the Conference.

The leading object to be obtained by the Conference is the establishment, by fiscal regulations, of reciprocal trade advantages between the mother-country and the different colonies of the Empire, and between those colonies themselves.

With this view it is most desirable that the fullest information relating to the trade of the different colonies should be given; and to that end I am directed to request that you will furnish me, at the earliest moment, with statistics of your trade, stating the available surplus for exportation of your different productions, and of your imports and exports from and to Great Britain and any of the colonies and foreign countries.

We cannot but recognize that the bond between the several dependencies of the British Empire and Great Britain would be greatly strengthened if we could secure the establishment throughout the Empire of reciprocal inter-British trade, with a provision extending to foreign countries the same privileges, upon their agreeing to grant similar reciprocal rights to the Empire.

You are cordially invited, in accordance with the arrangement referred to, to send three delegates to the proposed Conference from your Chamber of Commerce, or such organisation as represents your commercial interests.

I sincerely trust that you will, at your earliest convenience, inform us if you acquiesce in the arrangements

herein indicated, and furnish me with a copy of any resolutions or propositions which you wish to have discussed, along with the names of the gentlemen appointed by you to attend the Conference.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
WM. J. PATTERSON,
Secretary.

Calcutta, 25th August 1880.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th of May, relative to a conference proposed to be held in London early next year, with the object of drawing closer the trade relations between the colonies and dependencies of the British Empire, and to which you have been so good as to invite the attendance of three Delegates from this Chamber to represent the commercial interests of the port of Calcutta.

The Committee of this Chamber desire me to thank you for the opportunity thus afforded of being associated in a movement of so much importance, but they much regret they are not at present prepared to appoint any gentlemen to avail themselves of your invitation, as the movements of their commercial friends are uncertain and their nominees may not have it in their power to attend the Conference.

With regard, however, to the statistics of the trade of this city, the Committee very gladly place at your disposal the latest returns published by the Government, and by their instructions the following documents have been for-

warded to their Agents in London for transmission to the Dominion Board of Trade :—

1 & 2. Annual Statements of the trade and navigation of British India for the year ending 31st March 1879.

3. Review of the Trade of British India for the same period.

4. Annual Statement of the sea-borne trade and navigation of the Bengal Presidency for the same period.

The first three publications will, it is believed, afford the fullest information you can desire on every point in connection with the general trade of this country, and the Review amply illustrates the growth or decline of any branch of our commerce. The last statement embraces the sea-borne trade of this Presidency, and the introductory remarks will place you fully in possession of the principal points relating to the operations of this port and its coasting traffic.

The Committee regret their inability to state the available surplus for exportation of the various productions of this province, it being almost impossible to arrive at any estimate of the stocks held by native merchants in the numerous markets in the interior of the country.

There can be no doubt, however, that considerable stocks *are* retained, for whenever an abnormal demand arises, and highly remunerative prices can be secured, there is an immediate response, without any apparent exhaustion of the ordinary trade supplies.

THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF WOOLS AND WOOLLEN MANUFACTURES FOR 1881.

Crystal Palace, Sydenham.

August 10th, 1880.

I have the honour to inform you that the Directors of the Crystal Palace Company intend to hold an International Exhibition next year of Wool and Woollen Manufactures and their allied industries, of which details are forwarded herewith, and they will feel obliged if you will cause this fact to be made known to the members of your Chamber, and the public interested.

I am, &c.,

P. L. SIMMONDS,

Superintendent of the International Exhibition Department.

EXHIBITION FOR 1881.

WOOLS, WOOLLEN MANUFACTURES, AND ALLIED INDUSTRIES.

(Commencing in JUNE and ending in OCTOBER.)

No charge will be made to Exhibitors for space.

Medals and Certificates of Merit will be awarded by competent Jurors to be appointed.

The Directors will furnish Motive-Power for working Machinery free: but any driving-belts, connections, or attachments required must be made at the expense of the Exhibitors.

All applications from intending Exhibitors must furnish full particulars of the space required, and the objects in-

tended to be shown, and be sent in to the Superintendent before the 1st January 1881. After careful considera tion and revision by the Directors of the demands received, due notice will be given to the applicants whether any and what space can be granted them.

Goods intended for exhibition must be delivered with freight and all charges paid, by a date to be hereafter fixed. The cases must be addressed to the Superintendent, International Exhibition Department, Crystal Palace, bearing some mark or number, and accompanied with a detailed invoice of the contents. The cases will then be handed over to the duly authorised Agent of the Exhibitor to open and arrange.

Due notice of the appointment of an Agent by an Exhibitor must be forwarded to the Superintendent for approval and sanction by the 1st April 1881. If he is required to attend at the Stand daily, a free pass into the Palace will be granted him for the term of the Exhibition, subject to the approval of the Directors, who, however, reserve the power to withdraw the pass whenever they may consider it desirable.

In the case of Exhibitors who may not think it necessary to appoint an Agent or Attendant, the Superintendent will, on due request made by the 10th of the month of April, employ some official to give information, who will instal and arrange the goods at the Exhibitor's charge.

Endeavours will be made to obtain for Exhibitors favourable terms for freight by railroad and steamboat.

All Show-Cases, Stands, Shelves, and other Fittings must be erected at the charge of the Exhibitor, and sub

ject to the approval of the Superintendent. All objects shown must be numbered and properly labelled, and described with the Maker's or Exhibitor's name, address, and, if possible, the price at which similar articles will be sold.

The Directors of the Crystal Palace Company will not on any account be responsible for loss or damage, from whatever cause arising, to Cases, Fittings, or any Articles exhibited. Exhibitors can effect Insurance on their own account.

Exhibitors must furnish the necessary information for the official catalogue before the 1st March 1881. Those desirous of advertising in the catalogue must make their application to the Superintendent by the 1st of May 1881, for the necessary arrangements to be made for such insertion, and for the amount of payment thereof.

Exhibitors must conform to all rules laid down by the Directors.

A detailed programme of the various classes of goods admissible can be obtained on application to the undersigned.

P. L. SIMMONDS,
Superintendent of the International Exhibition Dept.,
Crystal Palace, Sydenham.

THE Great International Exhibitions, which commenced in the United Kingdom in 1851, have in the course of time grown too large and expensive to be carried out in their entirety without considerable loss, and there appears to be no present prospect of their being resumed in England on the general extended scale.

The Crystal Palace being the offspring of the first great British International Exhibition, the Directors are desirous, as far as possible, of carrying out the original intentions and objects contemplated, namely, of affording Manufacturers and the Public, Home and Foreign, the opportunity of noting the progress which has been made in different countries in the arts, manufactures, and various industries, by the application of science and invention.

Having space at command, motive-power for machinery, two millions of visitors annually, and organised staffs, and a close connection with the chief industrial artistic and scientific societies, with many other advantages possessed nowhere else; and ten years having elapsed since the last official Annual Exhibitions were commenced, the Directors have arranged to hold a series of special International Exhibitions of different classes of manufactures. They will commence in 1881, with an International Exhibition of Wool and its varied applications and manufactures, with those of a few allied products, and of the machinery and implements relating thereto.

The demand for Wool has increased with marvellous rapidity, and this raw material is produced more or less largely in all countries. But it is to the Australian and African Colonies that Europe is now mainly indebted for its supplies of superior Merino Wool. Of the 411,000,000lbs. of Wool imported into this country in 1879, nearly 355,000,000lbs. came from the British Possessions.

The Woollen Manufacture now ranks second in importance of the British textile industries, Wool being much preferred to any other material for nearly all clothing purposes. Although London is the centre of supply of

Wool to the Continent, and buyers are attracted here in large numbers, yet an interchange of manufactured products takes place even between competing countries. Buyers who come over to London to attend the periodical Wool sales have little opportunity of examining, in the confusion and competition of the sale-rooms, the characters and qualities of the raw Wools exposed, or of ascertaining the names of the Wool-growers.

A more leisurely and advantageous opportunity will be afforded to Purchasers and Manufacturers, in the proposed Exhibition, to examine all classes of Wools and Hair, and the fabrics made with them, and to obtain details of progress, improvements, prices, machinery, &c.

PROGRAMME OF OBJECTS ADMISSIBLE.

I.—SHEEP'S WOOL.

Raw Wools.—

Fleece Wool.
Skin Wool.
Lambs' Wool.
Fine Merino.
Combing Wool.
Clothing Wool.
Lustre Wool.
Demi-Lustre.
Down and Half-bred.
Extract Wool.
Woollen Rags for Shoddy and Mungo.
Woollen Flocks for Paper-hangings.
Dressed Sheep and Lamb Skins.
Coats and Caps made of them.

Prepared Wools and Manufactures.—

Woollen Yarn.
Worsted Yarn.
Genappe Yarn.
Fingering Yarns for Knitting and Embroidery.

WOOLLEN MANUFACTURES, BROAD CLOTHS, COATINGS DUFFELS, ETC. PLAIN, ALL WOOL OR MIXED WITH OTHER MATERIALS.

Army Cloths.
Doeskins.
Cassimeres.
Sataras.
Venetians.
Meltons.
Beavers.
Deerskins.

PROGRAMME OF OBJECTS ADMISSIBLE.—*(Continued.)*

Diagonals.
Pilots.
Reversibles.
Devons.
Spanish Stripes.
Fancy Coatings.
Victoria Twills.

NARROW CLOTHS, COATINGS, DUFFELS, ETC., OF WOOL, OR MIXED WITH OTHER MATERIALS.

Trousering.—
Bedford Cords.
Kerseymeres.
Elastics.
Sealskins.
Astracans.
Dogskins.
Chinchillas.
Polarians.
Shoddy and Mungo Fabrics.
Frieze.
Tweeds.
Tartans.
Horse Rugs.
Saddle Cloths.
Carriage Cloths.
Fancy Rugs and Mauds.
Blankets and Blanketing.
Billiard Cloths.
Baize and Serge.
Table Covers.
Coverlets, Railway Rugs, and Wraps.
Felt of Wool or Hair for Rolleers, Hats, Gloves, Shoes, etc.

Carpets.—
Tapestry, Velvet Pile, or Axminster.
Brussels and Wilton.
Kidderminster, Scotch, or Common.
Felt or Drugget.
Persian.
Turkish.
African or Morocco.
Indian.
Silesian.

Worsted Fabrics, all Wool.—
Satteens.
Reps.
Cords.
Serges.
Mohairs.
Moreens.
Coatings.
Plainbacks.
Merinos and Says.
Paramattas.
Camlets.
Bunting for Flags.
Albert Cords.
Persian Cords.
Chene Poplins.
Alpaca Cloths.
Furniture Stuffs and Upholstery Fabrics.
Plushes and Velvets.
Tapestry Curtains.
Berlin Wool Work.
Embroidery.

PROGRAMME OF OBJECTS ADMISSIBLE.—*(Continued.)*

Fringes, and Trimmings of Wool or mixed Materials.
Gold-embroidered Cloaks and Table Covers.

WORSTED STUFFS MIXED WORSTED WITH Cotton WARPS OR OTHER MATERIALS.

Crapes.
Coburgs.
Barege.
Damasks, Figured or Fancy.
Taffetas.
Veloutine.
Bombazine.
Paramatta.
Tammies.
Summer Cloth.
Delaines.
Lastings.
Canton Cloths.
Orleans Cloths.
Chenes.
Challies.
Lenos.
Checked Poplins.
Fancy Tweeds.
Gambroons.
Irish Poplins.

Shawls.—

Shetland.
Austrian.
Belgian.
French.
Cashmere, long and square.

Union Cloths.

Hosiery and Small Wares.

II.—GOATS' WOOL OR MOHAIR.

Raw Wools.—

Angora, or Mohair.
Cashmere.
Koork.
Pashum, or Shawl Wool of the Thibet Goat.
Common Goats' Wool.
Goats' Skins with the Wool on.

Fabrics and Manufactures.—

Dress Fabrics.
Brilliantines.
Utrecht Velvet.
Mohair Mixed Fabrics.
Mohair Lace and Braids.
Goats' Hair Cloth.
Rugs.
Sacks.
Forensic Wigs.

III.—ALPACCA, LLAMA, AND VICUNA.

Raw Wool of various colors.
Yarn and Fabrics of Alpaca, etc.

IV.—CAMELS' HAIR.

Raw Wool of different colours.
Shawl Wool.
Shawls.
Carpets.
Tent Cloth.

V.— Cow HAIR.

Ropes, Sacks, Blankets, Carpets, Felt, and other Fabrics made of it.

PROGRAMME OF OBJECTS ADMISSIBLE.—*(Continued.)*

Yak Wool or Hair, Moose Hair, and other Hair.

VI.—HORSE HAIR FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES.

Drawn Hair.
Fabrics made of it.
Horse-Hair seating of different colours.
,, Bags.
,, Gloves and Flesh Rubbers.
,, Wigs.
Brushes, Sieves.

VII.—HUMAN HAIR.

Various applications of it for twists and strong rope.
Hair Work and Fancy Ornaments.
Braids, Wigs, and other Coverings for the Head.

VIII.—CONEY OR RABBITS' WOOL.

Yarn and Fabrics made of these Wools.
Hare Wool.
Economic applications as Hats and Felted Fabrics, Hare-Skin Chest Protectors, Caps and Clothing.

IX.—SKINS OF FUR-BEARING ANIMALS, ROUGH AND PREPARED.

Bear Skins and articles made of them.
Buffalo Robes.
Fur-Seal Skins dressed and undressed.
Beaver Skins.
Otter and Sea Otters.
Sable and Ermine.
Marten and Mink.
Fox and Monkey Skins
Chinchilla, Squirrel, and other minor Fur-bearing Animals.
Fur Gloves.
,, Cloaks.
,, Muffs and Boas.
,, Hats.
Carriage Furs.
Skin Mats.

X.—BIRDS' SKINS AND FEATHERS FOR CLOTHING, ORNAMENT, OR ARTICS.

Raw Materials.—
Swan Skin.
Goose Skin.
Penguin Skin.
Grebe.
Ostrich Feathers.
Paddy Feathers.
Marabou Feathers.
Vulture (Rhea) Feathers.
Peacock Feathers.
Egret Plumes.
Birds of Paradise.
Humming Birds.
Other bright plumaged Birds.

Prepared Applications.—
Feather Muffs.
,, Trimmings for Dresses.
,, Jewellery.
,, Fans and Flyflappers.
,, Mats and Rugs.

PROGRAMME OF OBJECTS ADMISSIBLE.—*(Continued.)*

Feather Plumes.

„ Flowers and Ornaments.

Swansdown Puffs.

Elderdown Quilts.

Other economic Applications of Feathers.

XI.—DRAWINGS, PAINTINGS, PRINTS, AND OTHER REPRESENTATIONS OF THE WOOL AND FUR-BEARIG ANIMALS AND BIRDS YIELDING USEFUL FEATHERS.

XII.—MACHINERY, IMPLEMENTS, AND TOOLS USED IN WOLLEN AND WORSTED MANUFACTURES, WHETHER WORKED BY HAND OR BY POWER.

BLEACHING AND DYEING MATERIALS.

DESCRIPTIVE PUBLISHED WORKS, AND STATISTICAL TABLES, PRINTS, ETC., DESCRIBING, WOOL AND WOOLLEN MANUFACTURES AND OCCUPATIONS OR THE COMMERCE IN THEM AND THOSE OF HAIR, FUR-FEATHERS, ETC.

PORT COMMISSIONERS' REPORT FOR 1879-80.

RESOLUTION:

READ—

The Administration Report of the Port Commissioners of Calcutta for 1879-80.

The most important measure of the year in connection with the administration of the Port Trust was the passing of an Act, amending Act V. (B.C.) of 1870, to enable the Commissioners to consolidate the various loans made to them from time to time by Government, and to afford them facilities for contracting future loans in the open market. The present financial position of the Trust stands thus :—inclusive of the sum of ten lakhs of rupees for works previously carried out by Government, which was charged as a debt against the Trust when it was first constituted, the Commissioners have borrowed Rs. 60,25,100 from Government. The loans were all

advanced subject to interest at 4½ per cent., and repayment by instalments in 30 years. The Commissioners have during the past ten years repaid Rs. 6,84,751, and the balance left for consolidation under the new Act was therefore Rs. 53,40,349. This amount is to be repaid in 30 years by half-yearly instalments of Rs. 1,63,067-5, inclusive of interest at 4½ per cent. The Trust has, moreover, a permanent book-debt of Rs. 17,65,000, which is not repayable, but is charged with interest at 4½ per cent., amounting to Rs. 39,712-8 half-yearly. This represents the original value of the block made over to the Commissioners on the transfer of the Port to their charge. The actual value of the block on the 31st March last was Rs. 15,65,000, allowance being made for a total deduction of Rs. 2,87,608 for depreciation, and an addition of Rs. 87,608 for renewals. The Port has, however, acquired new block of the total value of Rs. 3,14,589, and the present value of its entire block is, therefore, Rs. 18,79,589. (The statement on page 72 of the report should have included the new moorings and heave-up boat, which are entered in the statement on the preceding page). Since the close of 1877-78 a Depreciation Reserve Fund of Rs. 2,00,000, accumulated from the unspent balances of the amounts annually set aside for renewal, has also been returned on account of the block. In addition to this Fund, the Commissioners have to their credit an investment of Rs. 3,50,000 to meet extraordinary and unforeseen expenditure, such as might be required on the occurrence of a cyclone. The total reserve secured by both funds is thus five and a half lakhs of Rupees.

2. Against the consolidated debt, and the permanent book-debt, amounting together to Rs. 71,05,349, the

Commissioners hold property of the total value of Rs. 1,21,10,811, estimated only according to the expenditure incurred on new works, on the purchase of a portion of the land occupied, and in the formation of the reserve funds; thus—

	Rs.
Expenditure on jetties and works for the accommodation of sea-going vessels	46,84,503
Expenditure on wharves, jetties, and landing stages for the accommodation of boat traffic, and tramways to connect railway with wharves and jetties	48,78,887
Expenditure on buoys, moorings, anchor-vessels, and boats, &c.	18,79,588
Investment for Jetty Reserve Fund ...	69,243
Ditto for Port ditto ...	3,64,250
Ditto for Depreciation Reserve Fund ...	1,99,995
Ditto for Insurance ditto ...	34,345
Total ...	1,21,10,811

The following table shows how the foregoing expenditure was met:—

	Rs.
By loans repayable (from Government) ...	58,95,973
By book-debt loan	17,65,000
Contribution from Government towards purchase of land ...	74,584
From sale of surplus lands	4,08,872
From current revenue since 1870 ...	39,66,382
Total ...	1,21,10,811

3. The new Act, besides enabling the Commissioners to consolidate their outstanding loans, provides for the half-yearly payment of interest on the book-debt of Rs. 17,65,000, and regulates the manner and terms on which

new loans may be contracted, and the interest or the value of the loans may be recovered on default. Such loans require the sanction of the local Government, and must be contracted in India and in the Indian currency, unless the Lieutenant-Governor, with the approval of the Government of India, direct otherwise; and the Commissioners are bound to provide a sinking fund by half-yearly instalments, in the case of each loan, to liquidate the loan within 30 years. The loans may be raised on the security of the whole or of a portion of the property of the Commissioners, or of their receipts from tolls, duties, &c., and Government retains no preferential claims as heretofore on their property. The Port Reserve investments of five and a half lakhs of rupees and the sinking fund for the liquidation of each loan are, however, specially exempted from liability on account of the repayment of loans. For the recovery of the interest or principal of a loan, the property or the sources of income on the security of which the loan was made may be attached by Government, and the proceeds appropriated to discharging the liabilities.

4. The Trust is in a satisfactory financial condition, and it may be hoped that the ample security afforded by their property and income, and provided for by the recent law, will place the Commissioners in a position of credit as borrowers in the open market. The provision of the law requiring that the previous sanction of Government shall be obtained to every loan is a safeguard against undue borrowing, but the Lieutenant-Governor trusts that, in this respect, the Government will very rarely, if ever, find itself called upon to overrule the proposals of the Commissioners.

5. The total income of the Commissioners during the past year was Rs. 18,64,293 as compared with Rs. 18,57,990 in 1878-79. The year having opened with a revenue cash balance of Rs. 3,73,041, the full amount available for expenditure from revenue was Rs. 22,37,334. The ordinary revenue expenditure, including the half-yearly payment on account of debt, was Rs. 13,67,948, Rs. 5,85,612 were appropriated for new works and improvements, Rs. 32,634 were held on suspense account, and Rs. 2,57,140 remained as a cash balance at the end of the year.

6. The steady progress in the construction of new works and improvements, which has marked the administration of the Commissioners from year to year, has been fully maintained during 1879-80. Much, nevertheless, remains to be done to complete the arrangements required for the accommodation of the large and growing traffic of the Port, and a heavy annual outlay will be indispensable for many years to come. Of the total expenditure of the past year on new works, amounting to Rs. 7,90,925, Rs. 4,13,390 were spent in improving the accommodation for sea-going vessels at the jetties, Rs. 1,63,885 in improving the accommodation for boat-traffic, Rs. 64,610 on the tramway, and Rs. 1,48,840 on works of general improvement. A new jetty and two cargo-sheds were completed, and six new cranes set up for sea-going vessels. The Port now possesses three jetties at which cargo can be delivered direct from the vessels to the sheds without the use of trollies. For the benefit of the boat-traffic the retaining wall and ghâts from Aheereetollah to Baghbazar have been completed, eleven new toll-houses erected, and five additional landing-stages provided. The tramway line was doubled in two places, and twenty new

waggons were procured to meet the increase in the local traffic. Two new warehouses, for the storage of country produce, were completed on the Strand Bank lands, a heave-up boat was added to the block of the Port, and a new line of moorings was laid between Chandpal Ghât and Fort Point.

7. The jetties yielded a gross income of Rs. 6,69,654, against Rs. 6,74,923 in 1878-79; the expenditure was Rs. 4,67,577, and the net income Rs. 2,02,077. It is satisfactory to learn that the Commissioners' anticipation that the reduction in the landing charges, which came into operation on the 1st August 1878, would result in a large decrease of the jetty receipts has not been fulfilled. There was actually an increase of Rs. 8,099 in the income from these charges, owing to an increase in the quantity of goods landed. On the other hand, notwithstanding the larger quantity of goods landed, wharf rents and removal charges fell off by Rs. 17,539, consignees having been more prompt in removing their goods. The largest increase in landing charges was derived from piece-goods, on which Rs. 12,917 were realized in excess of the receipts of the previous year. Of the charges on exports, amounting to Rs. 55,745, three-fifths were paid on hides and tea. These articles are more conveniently shipped at the jetties than by boats, and the shipments at the jetties are increasing. The jetty expenditure exceeded that of the previous year by Rs. 14,239, owing to an increase in the charge for interest and necessary strengthening of the working establishments. The jetties were used by 192 vessels against 184 in 1878-79, with an increase of 20,000 tons; but they were nevertheless occupied 50 days less than in 1878-79. It is not likely

therefore, that the Commissioners will experience any great difficulty in making convenient arrangements for accommodating the steamers trading with China and the Straits. The Lieutenant-Governor considers that the measures which have been taken to obviate the grounds of complaint urged by the Agents of these vessels are judicious and sufficient. The floating 30-ton crane is not realizing the expectations which the Commissioners entertained in regard to it as an investment. Its earnings amounted to Rs. 15,136 against an expenditure of Rs. 13,642, leaving a profit of only Rs. 1,494 on the original outlay of Rs. 1,47,217.

8. The receipts from the Inland Vessels' Wharves, including the Tramway, were Rs. 4,80,923 against Rs. 4,59,862 in the previous year, and the expenditure was Rs. 3,21,535 against Rs. 2,65,137, leaving a net income of Rs. 1,59,388 as compared with Rs. 1,94,725 in 1878-'79. Exclusive of the tramway, however, the receipts fell off by Rs. 33,363. Of this sum, Rs. 27,456 is accounted for by a decrease in the tolls realized on grain and seeds. The Commissioners explain that a large portion of the grain and seed traffic which formerly came by boats is now carried by the East Indian Railway, and that up-country merchants having taken to the practice of sending down their grain and seed in bags ready for shipment, instead of transmitting them in bulk to be prepared for shipment in Calcutta, the consignments are conveyed direct to the ships from the Railway premises, and do not pass over the port wharves. The competition between the railway and the boats is doubtless causing a considerable reduction of the income of the Commissioners from their wharves, and its effects on their receipts are likely

to become more conspicuous, as the native traders learn more and more to appreciate the advantages offered by the railway, but in the general interests of trade this result cannot be contemplated with regret. The large increase in the expenditure of the past year on account of the wharves is due chiefly to the transfer to this head of a charge for interest hitherto shown in the accounts of the Strand Bank lands, and to the cost of repairing two slips in the river bank, which occurred towards the end of the rains.

9. The tramway is assuming a very prominent place among the works constructed by the Commissioners. It proceeds along the river bank and joins the Eastern Bengal Railway on the northern side of the Chitpore Canal, and has both a local traffic and a through traffic from the wharves and jetties to the railway. During the year its gross receipts amounted to Rs. 1,34,901, and the working expenses to Rs. 74,019, leaving a balance of Rs. 60,882 available for the payment of charges on account of interest and sinking fund, and for the cost of additional works. The returns of traffic show a large increase over the results of the two previous years. The Eastern Bengal Railway Company have, after a year's trial, withdrawn from the agreement under which they undertook the superintendence of the line, and this has reverted to the Commissioners. The projects lately submitted by the Commissioners for the construction of additional sidings and for other works of extension and improvement have received the sanction of Government. They appear to have been adopted by the Commissioners after very careful consideration and consultation with merchants interested in the tramway.

10. The accounts of the Strand Bank lands show an increase of nearly Rs. 10,000 derived from the rents of the warehouses and godowns. The total income amounted to Rs. 1,52,415 against Rs. 1,43,021 in 1878-79. The expenditure was Rs. 83,009 against Rs. 91,731. There was a large reduction under the head of interest caused by the transfer mentioned above.

11. In the Port Proper, or Harbour Master's Department, the receipts amounted to Rs. 5,61,299, and the expenditure to Rs. 3,92,352, as compared with Rs. 5,80,184, and Rs. 3,98,106 respectively in the previous year. The net revenue was thus Rs. 1,68,947 against Rs. 1,82,078 in 1878-79. The receipts from mooring hire were enhanced by a payment of Rs. 36,000 on account of Government vessels, which was due for the previous year. The fees from cargo and passenger-boats also yielded a much larger amount than was expected. During the year 4,982 cargo-boats and 399 passenger-boats were surveyed by the Commissioners' Surveyor, and 1,565 passenger-boats, surveyed before the transfer of the control of these boats from the Commissioner of Police to the Port Commissioners, were also plying in the port. Altogether 5,281 boats and 5,085 manjhees were licensed and registered by the Commissioners. The receipts amounted to Rs. 47,772. This income was, however, in excess of what the Commissioners required, and the Lieutenant-Governor willingly sanctioned the reduction of the rates proposed by them after the close of the year, in the interests of the boat-owners and manjhees.

12. The total number of vessels which entered the port during the year was 896, of which 442 were steamers, and 454 sailing vessels. There was a decrease of 71 vessels

as compared with the previous year, but the falling off in tonnage was comparatively small, the average size of the vessels having again increased. The total gross tonnage was 14,15,979 tons against 14,30,789 in 1878-79. The steamers which came through the Suez Canal were 136 in number, and their average tonnage reached the high figure of 2,688 tons. The decrease in shipping necessarily caused a reduction in the number of operations carried out by the Harbour Master's Department during the year; but the Lieutenant-Governor notices with satisfaction that the percentage of accidents also showed reduction. He has already had occasion to comment favourably on the improvement which has also taken place in recent years in the management of vessels by pilots in the port approaches.

13. The services of the floating fire-engine were called into requisition in several serious cases last year. The most important of these was the explosion at Garden Reach on board the boats laden with kerosine-oil discharged from the ship *Chalmette*, the consequences of which might have been of the gravest character had not the tide and wind prevented the burning sheet of oil, extending some 400 feet across the stream, from drifting up into the harbour among the shipping. The whole question of the importation, transport, and storage of inflammable oils was fully enquired into and reported on by the Committee appointed in consequence of this accident, and the matter was submitted to the Government of India. The Lieutenant-Governor is glad to observe that a Bill is now before the Supreme Council to regulate the traffic in these oils. The Commissioners refer in paragraph 70 of the Report to the proposal which they

lately submitted to Government for an increase in the fees charged for the storage of gunpowder in the Moyapore Magazine. The orders of Government have lately been communicated to them. The Lieutenant-Governor has sanctioned the revised charges for the delivery order and the godown rent, but there appeared to him to be no sufficient grounds for sanctioning the fee of Rs. 5 which the Commissioners proposed to levy from each vessel entering the port.

14. The anchors recovered during the year were 17 in number, and the chains measured 454 fathoms. With the addition of the stock on hand, there were 42 anchors and 926 fathoms of chain for disposal. The total disposed of, by delivery to the owners or by sale, was 36 anchors and 822 fathoms of chain. The sum realized by sale amounted to Rs. 3,966. The Harbour Master's report shows that the moorings were properly attended to during the year, and that their condition is satisfactory. The dredging operations of the year do not contrast favourably with those of the previous year. The number of cubic feet dredged was larger, but the amount earned fell off, causing an increase in the net cost of dredging and in the rate per 1,000 cubic feet. This is accounted for, as the report explains, by the loss of one of the hopper barges, which collided with a buoy and sank. All the efforts made to raise the barge proved unavailing, and she has entirely disappeared beneath the sand. A new barge must be procured to prevent the entire stoppage of dredging operations in case the remaining barge is disabled or lost.

15. Opportunity was taken of the passing of the new Act to amend the provisions of Act V., 1870, in regard to the making of bye-laws for the purposes of the Trust, so as

to remove any doubt of the power of the Commissioners to enforce the observance of the bye-laws by the public. Their powers in connection with the working of their tramway were also enlarged.

16. The Government agreed during the year to transfer to the Commissioners the Armenian Ghât site and buildings at a valuation of Rs. 4,05,716. This amount will have to be raised by a loan under the provisions of the new Act. The Lieutenant-Governor trusts that the negotiations between the Commissioners and the Municipality for the removal of the unslightly structure which serves as the pumping-station of the Corporation at Chandpal Ghât will be brought to a satisfactory termination before long. The matter bas been pending for two years.

17. The Bill to provide for the detention of unseaworthy ships, and to introduce various amendments in the Indian Merchant Shipping Law, which was alluded to in paragraph 22 of the Resolution on the last report of the Commissioners, became law on the 11th March of the current year. It authorizes the local Government to make over to the Port Commissioners the working of the provisions relating to unseaworthy and unsafe ships. The report which the Commissioners have submitted on this and other matters in the Act, which were referred to them for opinion, is under consideration, and orders will be issued as soon as practicable.

18. The question of bringing the Port Officer's Department under the control of the Commissioners, and thus extending their jurisdiction to the approaches of the port, has at length reached its final stage. It was investigated and reported on by a Special Committee during the year,

and the views of the Lieutenant-Governor on the subject will be shortly submitted to the Government of India.

19. In conclusion, the Lieutenant-Governor desires to acknowledge the ability and interest which the Commissioners have manifested in the adminstration of the affairs of the Trust during the year. They have in their Vice-Chairman, Mr. Duff Bruce, an executive officer whose services to the Port are of the greatest value.

PORT OFFICER'S REPORT FOR 1879-80.

RESOLUTION:

READ—

The Annual Report of the Port Officer for 1879-80.

LIEUTENANT STIFFE was appointed Port Officer in the course of the year, and assumed charge of his duties from Lieutenant Warden on the 5th August last. Lieutenant Warden remains attached to the department for the present as an Assistant Port Officer.

2. The Pilot Service consisted at the end of the year of 67 pilots and 22 leadsmen, or a total of 89 officers. The number of pilots is below the sanctioned strength of the service (70 pilots and 20 leadsmen), but it is at present quite sufficient for the work of the port. The casualties of the past year were one death and one dismissal among the pilots. Four licensed leadsmen qualified for pilots, and were admitted to the mate's grade; and eleven leadsmen apprentices appointed since 1877 passed their first examination as second mates, of whom six have been posted to pilot brigs as second officers, while five continue to run as leadsmen, pending the occurrence of vacancies on pilot vessels. The result of this

examination was creditable to the leadsmen apprentices. The Port Officer speaks very favourably of the efficiency of the Pilot Service as a whole, and in this opinion the Lieutenant-Governor fully concurs. Some important changes affecting the distribution of work among the members of the service were carried out during the year. These changes were advocated by the majority of the pilots themselves, and experience has so far shown that they have been attended with good results. Applications for pilots were restricted to the pilot who brings the vessel up, and, failing him, to the pilot of the turn; it was ruled that special pilots should be allowed only to lines of mail steamers; that no pilot below the grade of senior master should run as a special pilot, save on vessels of his own grade and tonnage, and that the sanction of Government must be obtained in every case to the employment of a special pilot; and the allotment of tonnage among the different grades was revised. The following scale of tonnage was fixed as compared with the scale previously in-force :—

Present Scale.		*Former Scale.*	
	Tons.		Tons.
Mate Pilots up to	... 800	Mate Pilots up to	... 800
Junior Masters	801—1,300	Junior Masters	801—1,175
Senior Masters	801—1,600	Senior Masters	801—1,300
Branch Pilots	over 1,600	Branch Pilots	over 1,300

The new scale has been introduced tentatively. Monthly statements showing the effect of the change are being submitted by the Port Officer, and the whole subject will be reconsidered after a sufficient period has elapsed.

3. The following statement gives particulars of the shipping of the port during the past ten years :—

Comparative statement showing the number of arrivals and departures of vessels, their tonnage, and the

number of sailing vessels that took steam during the last ten years from 1870-71 *to* 1879-80.

YEAR.	Number of arrivals.	Tonnage.	Number of departures.	Tonnage.	Number of arrivals and departures.	Average tonnage.	Total tonnage.	Number of vessels that took steam inwards.	Number of vessels that took steam outwards.	Total number of vessels that took steam both inwards and outwards.
1870-71	931	988,385	938	999,601	1,869	1,064	1,988,036	538	675	1,213
1871-72	959	1,119,052	930	1,095,102	1,889	1,172	2,214,154	510	615	1,125
1872-73	948	1,149,648	954	1,133,627	1,902	1,200	2,283,275	480	619	1,099
1873-74	981	1,220,549	946	1,216,898	1,927	1,265	2,437,447	487	502	989
1874-75	927	1,280,604	961	1,321,993	1,888	1,423	2,602,597	408	422	830
1875-76	914	1,274,944	906	1,284,321	1,820	1,406	2,559,265	339	497	836
1876-77	1,161	1,696,701	1,121	1,598,250	2,282	1,443	3,294,951	565	577	1,142
1877-78	1,372	2,056,944	1,321	1,987,041	2,693	1,506	4,043,985	624	574	1,198
1878-79	967	1,430,789	1,000	1,480,985	1,967	1,480	2,911,774	436	487	923
1879-80	896	1,415,979	895	1,420,441	1,791	1,584	2,836,420	403	456	859

If the two years 1876-77 and 1877-78, during which there was an abnormal increase of shipping on account of the large exports of grain to the famine-stricken districts of Southern India, be left out of consideration, it will be observed from this statement that the number of arrivals and departures in the past year was the lowest of any year since 1869-70, while the aggregate tonnage was the highest, save that for the year 1878-79; and that the average tonnage of vessels visiting the port has been steadily increasing since 1869-70, reaching its maximum (1,584 tons) in the past year. The number of arrivals in the past year was 896, and of departures, 895, or a total of 1,791. Of the former, 442 were steamers and 454 sailing vessels; and of the departures, 434 were steamers and 441 sailing vessels. These figures do not include steamers plying to Chandbally, of which there were 111 arrivals and 112 departures, and native craft. Of the steamers that visited the port 133, and of the sailing vessels 153, drew 21 feet and upwards. The branch

pilots piloted on an average 4·28 vessels each a month, the masters 2·77, and the mates 2·36 vessels.

4. There were 34 groundings of vessels, 31 of which were attended with no damage, and ten collisions, all of a trifling character. The percentage of accidents on the shipping was 2·45. The only total loss which occurred within the limits of the port was that of the inland steamer *Chunar*, which struck the bank and foundered in Diamond Harbour Reach in May 1879. The vessel was not, however, in charge of a pilot, and the port authorities were in no way responsible for the casualty. A statement appended to the report shows that there has been an immense improvement in the matter of accidents in the port approaches in recent years, notwithstanding the increase in the average size of the vessels visiting the port. Lieutenant Stiffe rightly remarks that this speaks well for the efficiency of the pilots, the accuracy of the surveys, and the management of the port. The Marine Court for the trial of pilots enquired into three cases during the year. Two cases resulted in acquittals, and one in the dismissal of the pilot, who was convicted of repeated disobedience of orders. There were also there departmental enquiries. In one case the pilot was acquitted of blame, in another he was reduced to half earnings for three months, and in the third he was cautioned. Although no serious casualty, save that of the *Chunar*, occurred within the limits of the port, the year was marked by three lamentable disasters close to the port. The first of these was the collision which took place between the ship *Brenhilda* and the British India Steam Navigation Company's steamer *Ava* on the night of the 31st May 1879, about 70 miles from the Sandheads, resulting

in the foundering of the *Ava*, with the loss of 70 lives. The Court of Enquiry held that the *Brenhilda* was in fault, but refrained from instituting proceedings against the Captain for the suspension of his certificate. The matter was brought by Government before the High Court in its Admiralty Jurisdiction, on charges framed against the Second Officer of the *Ava*, who was the officer of the watch on that vessel, and the Captain of the *Brenhilda*. The former was acquitted, but the certificate of the Captain of the *Brenhilda* was suspended for three months. The decision was confirmed by this Government. The next occurrence was the stranding and subsequent loss of the ship *Lady Belhaven* on the Argo Flat, at the mouth of the Haringhatta river in the Sunderbuns, on the 3rd July 1879. The crew succeeded in reaching the Hooghly in their boats and were rescued. The Captain was proved to have shown carelessness and incompetence in navigating his vessel, and his certificate was suspended for twelve months. The third casualty was the total loss of the ship *Philosopher*, with twelve lives and the entire cargo, on the 26th September 1879, at the mouth of the Davy river on the coast of Orissa. The Court of Enquiry were of opinion that the wreck was due to an unusually strong current running towards the Orissa coast, of the full effects of which the Captain was not in a position to judge. He was accordingly acquitted of blame.

5. The report gives, as usual, a detailed account of the condition of the channels leading to the port and of the work of the River Survey Department during the year. It appears that the James and Mary Bar was impassable for 37 days to vessels drawing 24 feet, for 19 days to

vessels drawing 23 feet, for 12 days to vessels drawing 22 feet, for 6 days to vessels drawing 21 feet, and for one day to vessels drawing 20 feet. The Bellary Bar was also impassable for 43 days to vessels drawing 24 feet, for 14 days to vessels drawing 23 feet, and for 5 days to vessels drawing 22 feet. These periods were confined to the neap tides. Three self-registering tidal-gauges have been sanctioned for the Hooghly, to be maintained under the direction of the Tidal Department of the Survey of India. The observations will doubtless prove of much advantage in connection with the navigation of the river.

6. The Indian Government steamer *Undaunted*, whose services are lent to this. Government as required, performed twenty-one trips to the Sandheads, Mutlah, and False Point during the year. On two occasions she proceeded to the wrecks of the *Lady Belhaven* and the *Philosopher* to render assistance. The state of the pilot-brigs, light-ships, and other vessels belonging to the local Government calls for no remark. The anchor-vessel *Vulcan* was condemned during the year, and another vessel to replace her is under construction in the Government Dockyard. The proposal to use the hull of the *Vulcan* as a floating coal hulk for the river survey vessels at Diamond Harbour, to which the Port Officer alludes in his report, has been abandoned, and the hull should now be sold. There being no vessel available for the work, no anchors or cables were recovered during the year. The stock of articles previously recovered was, however, sold. The amount realized was Rs. 7,788, while the expenditure for the year was only Rs. 1,692.

7. The usual inspection of the refuge-houses on the sea-face of the Sunderbuns was carried out, and the stocks

of provisions were replenished. The Port Officer also visited the Orissa ports and Chittagong. Orders were separately passed on the reports submitted by him.

8. The number of certificates granted to steam-vessels surveyed under Acts V. of 1862 and I. of 1868 was 143 against 152 in the previous year. In one case (the inland steamer *Bengal*), in which a certificate for three months only was granted, one of the boilers of the vessel burst shortly before the expiry of the certificate, causing the death of two men. In passing orders on the report of the Special Committee appointed to enquire into this explosion, the Lieutenant-Governor has laid down instructions which should greatly diminish the chance of such accidents in future. Fifty-one vessels were inspected under Act VIII. of 1876 (the Native Passenger Ships Act) during the year. Only two vessels were registered under the English Merchant Shipping Act, and none under Act X. of 1841. The examination for colonial certificates to masters, mates, and engineers resulted in the passing of 11 masters out of 12 candidates, of 2 first mates, 2 second mates, and 2 first-class engineers out of 3 candidates in each case, and of 3 second-class engineers out of 5 candidates. For local certificates, one master passed out of 3 candidates, 7 first mates out of 10 candidates, 12 second mates out of 14 candidates, 1 first-class engineer out of 3 candidates, 2 second-class engineers out of 4 candidates, and 18 engine-drivers out of 20 candidates. Examinations were also held for the first time for the grant of certificates to commanders of inland steamers, who are now bound to obtain such certificates under Act VII. (B.C.) of 1879.

9. The only other matters connected with the administration of the port and its approaches which call for notice are the following. Pilotage was made compulsory in the Hooghly for all vessels of a burthen exceeding 200 tons, under section 38 of Act XII. of 1875, from ths 1st January 1880. Native vessels of less than 500 tons are, for the present, permitted to use native pilots licensed by the Port Officer, and the Chandbally steamers are not required to employ a pilot, provided their commanders hold licenses as steam-tug pilots. Government has under consideration the orders to be issued for carrying out the provisions of the new Indian Merchant Shiping Act VII. of 1880. The matter cannot be finally settled before the receipt of reports from officers to whom references have been made, and the framing of rules under certain sections by the Government of India. A new first-order dioptric light was set up during the year in the False Point Lighthouse. The light has been exhibited since the 1st February last.

10. The Committee appointed in March 1879 to enquire into marine expenditure under this Government, submitted their report during the past year. The recommendations of the report have been already considered and disposed of. The Lieutenant-Governor regrets that they were not of such a nature as to enable Government to effect at once any material reduction of expenditure.

FUNDS OF THE CHAMBER.

The balance at credit of the Chamber on the 31st October 1880 amounted to Rs. 3,548-3-2,

exclusive of Rs. 15,000 in 4 per cent. Government Securities.

WALTER E. CRUM,
President.

Proceedings of the half-yearly General Meeting of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, held on Saturday, the 17th January 1880.

THE HONBLE. A. B. INGLIS, *President,* in the chair.

The Chairman, having read the advertisement convening the meeting, spoke as follows :—

Gentlemen,—Before referring more particularly to the Report, I have to tender my best thanks to the members of the Chamber for the honor they have conferred upon me in electing me their President. I may be permitted to express my regret that the choice did not fall on some one more competent than I feel myself to be to fulfil the duties of the office. More especially do I feel my inadequacy in succeeding one who so ably filled the chair as my immediate predecessor, Mr. Yule. I am sure, I only give utterance to the feeling of all present when I express the hope that Mr. Yule may soon be able to return to Calcutta to resume his place among us, and give us the benefit of his wise and experienced counsel in all mercantile matters.

With these preliminary remarks, I now proceed to notice some of the subjects named in the

Report. Foremost among these stands the license-tax. It was a matter of great regret to the Committee that they found themselves obliged to criticise adversely the action of Government in dealing with the proceeds of this tax. Believing as they did that Mr. Yule in his address to the Chamber at the last half-yearly meeting expressed the general feeling of members on this subject, the Committee, when called upon to express their opinion, did not hesitate to adopt and endorse their President's remarks. In a recent speech at home, Mr. Gladstone has spoken very much more strongly than Mr. Yule ever did in condemnation of the action of the Government of India with regard to this matter, and I think it will now be generally admitted that the Government were badly advised in the course they took. There was no wish on the part of the Committee to limit the freedom of the Government in the matter, but, looking to the pledges publicly given when the tax was first imposed, they felt that if Government either found it to be impossible to fulfil those pledges, or contrary to the public interest to apply the money in the particular way they had promised, it was incumbent on them to say so, and ask in a constitutional way to be relieved from the obligations they had come under. Had this been done in a straightforward way, and at the right time, no question could

have arisen as to the good faith of Government in the matter.

The Committee have again had the question of the license-tax before them in connection with a proposal to alter the existing law, and members have doubtless read the communication they addressed to Government on the subject last month. The Committee's representation seems to have been well received, and it is a gratifying fact that Government have expressed a willingness to withdraw the most objectionable features of the late proposal. I am sorry, however, they still seem to think it desirable to persevere with the proposal to merge the proceeds of the license-tax in the general revenues of the country, and to abandon the scheme of retaining a separate famine insurance fund. There can be no doubt that the only thing which reconciled the public to the tax, when it was first imposed, was the proposal to apply the monies which it yielded for the relief and prevention of famines. Nothing which has occurred during the last two years should cause any change in the policy of Government in this respect so far as I can see. It may be said that at least two disturbing elements have emerged which were not foreseen when the scheme of a famine insurance fund was proposed, *viz.*, the silver difficulty and the Afghan war. The former of these, however, is not new,

and although the loss by exchange in consequence of the depreciation in silver has increased, more good will be done in endeavouring to meet the difficulty while it lasts by judicious reductions in expenditure, as I am glad to think is now being done, than by appropriating funds required for another purpose to meet the deficiency thus created. As regards the expenses of the Afghan war, these are not a proper charge upon the current revenues in my opinion, even supposing India was to bear them. I for one am most strongly opposed to the Imperial policy which led to this war, and think it will be most unfair if India has to bear the cost of it, when, so far as I can judge, there was absolutely nothing in the circumstances of this country to warrant Government in embarking on the course which led to it, but rather everything to counsel an opposite policy. If the invasion of Afghanistan was considered necessary to support the prestige of the Home Government in their quarrel with Russia, the people of England who supported their policy should pay the bill. Putting this aside, however, war charges are usually provided for by loan, and I can see no justification for applying the proceeds of the license-tax to such a purpose.

The reasons, therefore, which commended the proposal to found a famine insurance fund to the

public mind two years ago, retain their full force to-day; and if Government deem it necessary to retain the license-tax, I think they will miss a great opportunity if they do not avail themselves of the comparative unanimity which exists on this point to establish some scheme of a permanent and tangible character which shall satisfy the public that a provision is being made to meet the periodically recurring strain upon the revenues caused by famines. If the tax is retained without something of this sort being done, I trust Government will at all events make it perfectly clear that its retention is not determined on with any view of enabling them to abolish the cotton duties. Allegations are being freely made that such a purpose is entertained; and it is desirable if there is no foundation for the statement that it should be authoritatively contradicted.

As the object of the Committee's letter to Government last month seems to have been misunderstood in some quarters, I may perhaps be allowed to say that there is no wish on the part of the mercantile community of Calcutta to shirk their fair share of public burdens; on the contrary, I feel sure that if the Government can show clearly that, setting aside all abnormal expenditure, and after retaining all

existing sources of revenue, it will still be impossible to avoid a deficit without imposing additional taxation, the mercantile public here, while regretting the necessity for it, will be prepared to bear their fair share of such taxation if only it be equitably apportioned throughout every section of the community, and levied in such a way as to cause the least possible annoyance to tax-payers. While saying this, I am strongly of opinion that not only will no additional taxation be found to be required, but that Government will have very great difficulty in showing good grounds for retaining the license-tax in even the modified and comparatively innocuous form now proposed, unless they mean to employ the money in re-establishing the discarded famine insurance fund in some shape or other. The latest published accounts show, in the clearest manner, that the Committee in their letter considerably under-estimated the strength of the financial position, and there has been no extra expenditure made public to set against the increased revenue, except such as is of an entirely abnormal kind, like the cost of the Afghan war, which cannot with any fairness be charged against current revenues.

It is undoubtedly a step in the right direction to raise the limit of incomes affected by the license-tax to Rs. 500, and to extend the incidence of the tax to professional and other classes hitherto

exempted. It is to be hoped, however, that the proposal to charge a percentage in the case of salaried persons, whose incomes are known, will not be persevered with, but that these will be graded in the same way as traders, and that no one, whatever his income may be, will be called upon to pay more than the fee fixed for the maximum grade. Because officials have been hitherto exempted from the operation of the tax, it is no reason why they should, in future, be more heavily assessed than other persons, as they will be if Sir John Strachey's latest proposal on the subject is carried out. It is surely perfectly feasible, and only fair, to put all on the same footing.

The question of export bills of lading for sailing vessels is another matter the Committee have had before them, and which will come before you to-day in the shape of a resolution, which I hope will be carried, signifying the Chamber's continued adherence to the forms of bill of lading and boat-note hitherto in use. We have received communications on the subject from the Hong-Kong, Shanghai, Yokohama, Rangoon, Coconada, and Kurrachee Chambers of Commerce, all more or less expressive of their concurrence with our views on this subject. The Hong-Kong Chamber in particular have addressed a protest to the ship-owners' society in England similar to our

own. Looking to the fact that the largest shipping ports in the east are all opposed to the alterations suggested, it is to be hoped our friends the ship-owners will not seek to press the matter any further.

The revised rules adopted last year by the London International Telegraph Conference are referred to in the Report; and Government, in replying to the Committee's representation on the subject, say in a letter received a few days ago that "the decisions of the International Telegraph Conference are those of the representatives of nearly every Government in the world, and in framing them the interests of the owners of the vast capital sunk in telegraph undertakings have to be kept in view as well as the interests and convenience of the general public." This is a pretty clear intimation that the Government of India will not help us in regard to a matter which causes much concern to all merchants who have gone to the trouble and expense of compiling private telegraphic codes. I refer to that most vexatious rule which interdicts the use of proper names of persons and places in a code message, except in their natural sense. What object the Conference had in framing such a rule it is difficult to see. It cannot be one whit more difficult for a tele-

graph signaller to transmit an ordinary proper name than an ordinary noun or adjective. If it be that some codes contain extraordinary proper names which in practice are found difficult to transmit, surely that is no reason for interdicting all geographical and other proper names without exception. A list of proper names which would be allowed might very easily have been compiled by the Conference, and an extra charge made in respect of all names tendered for transmission not contained in such list. If instead of framing restrictive rules of this description, the Conference had applied themselves some years ago to compiling a vocabulary of accepted words suitable for the construction of codes, it would have saved the public a very great expenditure of time and money, and the Telegraph Companies themselves an immense amount of trouble. Even now there is no guarantee that we have heard the last of the changes, as the Conference reserve power to themselves to alter their rules at any time. Unless something like finality is arrived at as to what will be admitted as code words, the present feeling of indignation, which, so far as I can learn, pervades all the mercantile communities engaged in the Eastern trade regarding the vexatious and harrassing action of the Telegraph Convention, is likely sooner or later to find expression in the construction of a

merchant's telegraph line between Europe, India, and China entirely independent of the Convention, and worked on the co-operative principle. This idea is already taking firm hold in many influential quarters, and it needs but a little more of the contempt for public convenience lately shown by the Conference to lead to definite action in the matter.

The Committee are glad that their recommendation to fix Wednesday all the year round as the day for the closing of the weekly overland mails in Calcutta under the new contract has been adopted by the postal authorities. They would have been still more glad if a mid-day departure on Saturday of the steamer from Bombay had also been acceded to, as they suggested, so as not to deprive Bombay of its Saturday half-holiday, and not to detain the Calcutta mails in the Bombay Post Office for half a day. The convenience of the rest of India would be perfectly well met, in the judgment of the Committee, if the hour of departure were fixed at two o'clock as proposed by the Indian postal authorities. Those who travel by the mail train have, as a rule, made all their arrangements beforehand, and do not require any time in Bombay after their arrival there. Those on the other hand, who have to make arrangements in Bombay before sailing can easily

time their arrival there a day before the steamer sails, so that the argument that 7 P. M. on Saturday evening must be fixed as the hour of sailing, to suit the convenience of passengers arriving in Bombay from other parts of India by the mail trains, will not bear examination for a moment. The Committee of the Chamber, while heartily sympathizing with their Bombay friends in their opposition to a Saturday evening departure of the mail steamer from that port, think it a mistake to ask, as they propose doing, that the day should be altered, when the object they have in view would be gained by simply altering the hour. The Calcutta community would unite with them in asking that the hour of sailing should be fixed at not later than 2 P.M. on Saturday, and I trust this arragement will be conceded by the authorities whose province it is to determine the matter.

The members of the Chamber will be glad to have the vexed question of the Doorgah Poojah holidays settled in the way it has been. The only matter for regret is that the curtailment of the holidays from twelve days to four is, I understand, felt to be a serious grievance by the native community. I feel sure that European employers connected with the Chamber will do what they can to make the change as little felt by their native employés as possible. Doubtless it will be

practicable to grant extra leave at that season in all deserving cases. It is said the curtailment is likely to be more felt in the mofussil than in Calcutta; and as to this I need only say that I see no necessity to regulate the holidays in the mofussil by rules suitable for a busy port like Calcutta. Where four days would be all that could with justice to all the interests concerned be granted in the one case, double that time might, without inconvenience, be given in the other. I would certainly deprecate any further change, so far as Calcutta is concerned, until it be seen how the new arrangement works.

Another subject referred to in the Report, as to which I need only say a word, is the Trade-Marks Bill. As published, the Bill contemplates the compulsory registration of all trade-marks whatever, whether these appertain to imported goods or to Indian manufactures. The Committee are of opinion that it would be most unfair to make the registration of English or foreign trade-marks compulsory in this country. In all such cases registration should be entirely optional, and the Committee trust the arguments they have adduced in support of this position will have due weight with Government should the measure be persevered with. There does not seem to be any urgent call for it on this side of India, and I am

not aware that the absence of legislation on the subject is felt to be an evil.

Among matters not mentioned in the Report which are at present receiving the attention of the Committee, I may mention the cotton duties. It has been found that the changes in the mode of levying the duties introduced in 1878, and again last year, are productive of much unnecessary trouble to the customs authorities, of serious inconvenience, harassment and loss to importers, and generally of great anomalies. Cases have been brought to the notice of the Committee where of two cloths made in the same mill and almost essentially like in weight, price, make, and appearance, one is admitted duty-free, and the other subjected to an impost of five per cent., simply because of a slight difference in the fineness of the yarn of which one of them is made as compared with the other. The consequence is, as might be expected, that the manufacture and import of duty-free goods, or of fabrics made to resemble such, is daily increasing, and that of dutiable goods is diminishing. At present the change presses with the greatest severity on standard makes of cloth of known quality which cannot be altered to suit the new Custom House rules, and, if some relief be not afforded, these will be gradually driven out of the market. If there was

a prospect that the trade would in a short time suit itself to the alteration in the mode of levying duty, those who are at present suffering from the anomalous state of things I have described would be content to wait: but it is represented to the Committee that there is no such prospect, and that the present state of things cannot be allowed to continue without grave injustice being done alike to Government and to importers. One large firm of importers write to the Committee as follows :—

"We hope the Committee is sending in a remonstrance to Government on the subject of the import duties on cotton goods. The evils of the system on which they are levied are too patent to require detailing, and some change must be admitted to be necessary. Indeed, it is probable that an alteration is contemplated by the authorities, and the danger is that it may be of as preposterous a character as the last.

Four alternatives occur to us :—

I.—The re-instatement of the duty on the old lines. This would be the most advantageous for India, but it is impracticable in the face of Lancashire opposition.

II.—A reduced duty of, say, 2½ per cent. applicable to all goods. This would involve the re-imposition of duty on goods now admitted free,

and would therefore meet with strenuous opposition from Lancashire; but no hardship need be inflicted if time be given to work off existing contracts in duty-free goods.

As the Custom House must be retained for the salt duty, the cost of collection, though great, would not be excessive, and a revenue of about half-a-million sterling would be retained.

III.—The free import of grey goods only, leaving dyed, printed, and white goods subject to the same duty as at present. This would give us the broad line of demarcation between duty-free and duty-paying goods which experience has shown to be necessary. Against this single advantage are the fatal defects that it would be unjust to the dyers, printers, and bleachers of the United Kingdom to place them on a worse footing than the manufacturers, and that the revenue raised would be trifling in comparison with the cost of collection.

IV.—The abolition of the import duty on *all* goods. To this, as importers, we can have no objection; but viewing the subject from a disinterested stand-point, we believe it would be a mistake.

The most feasible compromise will, we think, be found in our second alternative, and we shall be glad if the Committee will give it their support."

My own sympathies are entirely in favour of a return to an all-round duty on imports of cotton goods. The old duties were in no proper sense of the word protective, and the concessions which were made were yielded, as Dr. Hunter in his recent able address at Birmingham has so well pointed out, in the interests of Lancashire rather than of India. If the state of the public revenues permitted, we should all rejoice to see these and all other duties abolished entirely, but we seem to be very far indeed from being even in sight of such a desirable consummation. Such being the case, Government, in deciding on this matter, ought to look solely to the state of the revenues and to the interests of this country. The principle the Government both here and in England should follow in this and all other matters relating to India, is that enunciated by the Hon'ble Robert Lowe in a recent speech at home :" I believe there is no principle more true or more just than that Government is not to see how it can longest stay in office, but how it can do the most good for the country." It would be a happy thing for India if both the great political parties in the State would constantly act on this principle.

It is argued by those who are in favor of the abolition of the duties that the poorer classes of

this country would reap the benefit in cheaper clothing; and, assuming this would be the result, I admit that is a thing desirable in itself. Looking, however, to the admitted impossibility of reaching that class of the population who now ultimately pay the cotton duties by means of any system of direct taxation hitherto devised without causing serious discontent and oppression, and to this other fact that the cotton duties, as levied prior to 1878, were not in any sense regarded as a grievance by the class chiefly affected by them—I mean the native consumers of cotton cloths—I cannot but think it was a very grave error on the part of Government to move one single step in the direction of their abolition at a time when it was clear the sacrifice of revenue from this source involved the levy of other imposts of a much more obnoxious kind. The course of action then entered upon has brought Government face to face with the alternative now presented to them of either confessing error and boldly retracing their steps, or of abolishing the duties entirely. In the interests of this country, I certainly think the former course would be the right one to pursue; but, if other interests are allowed to prevail, as I fear they may, and the duties are swept away entirely, then I hope that, instead of seeking for a substitute in any new fangled schemes of taxation,

Government will equalize by levelling up, and, if need be, enhancing the salt duties all over India to the extent required to recoup the loss of revenue sustained in giving up the cotton duties. I am not insensible to the objections likely to be urged against this course; but I think if the poorer classes of natives get the benefit of the abolition of the one duty in cheaper clothing, as I make no doubt they would do, they can afford to pay a little more for a necessary like salt, and would themselves far rather pay it in that way than in any other. Nor with a license-tax, affecting incomes above Rs. 500, levied specially for a protection against famines could it be justly charged against the Government that they were letting off the better classes from paying their fair share of taxation at the expense of their poorer neighbours.

Before leaving this subject of customs tariffs, I may say that I should be very glad to see Dr. Hunter's suggestion for the abolition of custom houses as between England and India carried out. I doubt, however, if the revenues of either country can at present afford the sacrifice, or if the scheme limited, as Dr. Hunter proposes, to two countries only is workable, but it would undoubtedly be a great thing if the ports of both countries were declared free for the admission of the respective products of each. I hope it is not an al-

together Utopian idea, but one we may see carried out some day on even a wider scale than Dr. Hunter proposes.

The question of having uniform weights and measures througout India is one which, I think, presses for settlement. An Act was passed, No. 31 of 1871, which provides for this desirable reform, but Government have not hitherto enforced its provisions. The Committee of the Chamber submitted a representation to Government on the subject in February 1877, to which no reply has been received. The present diversity of standards which exists in every province and in every district in India is most puzzling, and causes confusion to people in business. I trust Government will move in the matter, and not allow the existing Act to remain a dead letter.

The only other matter to which I shall refer is the Bill to regulate labour in factories. The feeling prevalent here among those most competent to form an opinion on this subject is that such an Act is entirely unnecessary for Bengal. I do not profess to speak for Bombay, where the circumstances may be of a special kind; but, as a rule, I would deprecate Government interference in any form between employers and employed; and unless there are some undoubted abuses re-

quiring correction, and which cannot be prevented in any other way, such interference is likely to do more harm than good. I am not aware that any such abuses are alleged to exist in the mills and factories of Bengal.

Before closing, I would appeal to the members to support the Committee in their endeavours to make the Chamber as fully representative as possible of the mercantile interests of Calcutta. The Committee have not an easy task to perform, and they give a great deal of their time and bestow much pains in carefully considering the numerous references and subjects which come before them, whether from members of the Chamber or from Government. In return they ask the sympathy, help, and support of all the members, but specially of the older and more experienced men among us. If such would only come forward more readily than they are now willing to do to serve in the position I have now the honor to hold, and as members of Committee, I am sure the Chamber would be much more effective than it is, and we would not hear complaints, now too common, that we are somewhat slow in our movements, and that many subjects which should be taken up by the Chamber are overlooked. Such an institution as this, if well supported, is capable of doing more good here than similar bodies do at home, where

there is not the same absence of representative institutions as with us. We all, no doubt, feel the pressure of work in our several offices, and are only too ready to give way to the temptation such pressure induces to shirk anything of a public kind outside our own special interests. The efficiency of the Chamber is a matter, however, in which we are all equally concerned, and in promoting which we shall all benefit, and I hope more of the members will be found willing to give up a little of their time to further its interests.

I have now to move the adoption of the Committee's Report for the half-year ending 31st October last.

The motion was seconded by Mr. W. H. Cheetham and carried *nem con.*

The Chairman proposed the confirmation of the Committee's election of Mr. W. Duncan and Mr. John Morison as members of the Committee.

The proposition was seconded by Mr. John Horne and carried unanimously.

The Chairman also proposed that the Committee's election of Messrs. F. Acerboni and Co., as members of the Chamber be confirmed.

Mr. J. W. O'Keefe seconded the proposition which was carried.

Mr. R. P. Heilgers moved the following resolution :—

"That the form of the bill of lading and boat-note circulated to members with the Committee's letter of the 8th instant be adopted by this meeting as the common and customary bill of lading and boat-note in the port for sailing ships homeward."

The Resolution was seconded by Mr. S. E. Voigt, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Voigt, in a few words, drew attention to the rule which existed in reference to the measurement of jute and cotton, and inquired whether the old rule could not be re-established.

The Chairman suggested that the matter referred to by Mr. Voigt should, in the first instance, be submitted in a definite form to the Committee, who would give it every attention, invite the opinions of members on the subject, and bring it forward for future discussion.

The Chairman informed the meeting that the Chamber's Resolution of 31st May 1876 as to the conversion of sterling freight, &c. into Indian currency had been added to the Appendix to the Report for convenience of reference.

The Chairman then announced that the votes for the Vice-Presidentship had resulted in the election of Mr. John Morison.

Mr. Horne, in proposing a vote of thanks to the President and Committee for their labours during the past half-year, expressed the hope that the meetings of the Chamber would be more largely attended than was frequently the case. A good attendance of members would both strengthen and encourage the Committee in their disinterested labors on behalf of the mercantile community of Calcutta.

Mr. Froeschmann seconded the vote of thanks, which was carried with acclamation.

In acknowledging the compliment paid to himself and his colleagues, the Chairman said he had already refered to Mr. Yule, and he wished to add that the Committee had passed a resolution conveying their thanks to Mr. Yule for the services which the Chamber had received at his hands, and expressing their sympathy with him in connection with the cause which prevented his return to India.

The proceedings of the meeting were then closed by a vote of thanks to the Chair.

H. W. I. Wood,
Secretary.

APPENDIX.

LIBRARY
OF THE
BOMBAY
BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

FUNDS OF THE CHAMBER.

Statement of the Funds of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, from 1st May to 31st October 1880.

To Office Rent			900	0	0	By Balance		3,793	11	5
„ Establishment			5,361	0	0	„ Government Securities ...		15,000	0	0
„ Charges General			4,514	14	3					
	Rs.		10,775	14	3		Rs.	18,793	11	5
To Balance—						„ Subscriptions ...	7,028	0	0	
Cash in Bank of Bengal	1,302	12	2			„ Price current and other publications ...	3,202	6	0	
„ in hand ...	2,245	7	0			„ Interest	300	0	0	
Reserve in Government Paper	15,000	0	0							
			18,548	3	2			10,530	6	0
Rupees			29,324	1	5	Rupees		29,324	1	5

CALCUTTA,
31st October 1880.

E. E.

H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

TONNAGE SCHEDULE for the PORT OF CALCUTTA, adopted at a Special General Meeting of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, held on the 12th February 1872, with effect from 1st September 1872, except as regards the measurement of Cotton, Hemp, Jute Jute Cuttings, Rhea, Safflower, and other articles similarly packed, which, under the Chamber's Resolution of 14th June 1872, had effect from 1st July 1873.

ARTICLES.	Cwt. per Ton Nett.	Cubic feet per Ton.
Aloes, in bags and boxes	20	.....
Alum, in ditto	20	.....
Aniseed, in bags	8	.....
Arrowroot, in cases	.....	50
Arsenic, in bags or cases	20	.....
Asafœtida, in bags and boxes ...	20	.....
Apparel, in boxes	.....	50
Bark, in bags	8	.....
Bees' Wax	20 gross	
Barilla	20	.....
Betel-nut	20	.....
Books	.....	50
Borax	20	.....
Bran	14	.....
Brimstone	20	.....
Bullion	at per cent.	
Cake-lac, in bags	16	.....
Camphor, in cases	.....	50
Cardamoms, in robins	8	.....
„ boxes	.....	50
Cassia, in boxes	.....	50
„ bags	12	.....
Castor Seed	15	.....
Chillies, (dry) in bags	8	.....
China Root, in bags	11	.....
„ boxes	.....	50
Chiretta	.....	50
Churrah	14	.....
Cigars	.....	50
Cloves, in bags	8	.....
„ boxes	.....	50
Coals	20	.....
Cochineal	.....	50
Coffee, in bags	18	.....
„ casks	16	.....

ARTICLES.	Cwt. per Ton Nett.	Cubic feet per Ton.
Coral, rough	20	.....
Coir, loose and unscrewed	12	.....
Copras, or Cocoanut Kernel	14	.....
Coriander Seed	12	.....
Cotton	.....	50
Cowries	20	.....
Cummin Seed	8	....
,, Black	8	.....
Cutch, in bags	18	.....
Dates, wet	20	.....
,, dry	16	.....
Dholl	20	.....
Elephants' Teeth in bulk	20	.....
Furniture	.....	50
Garlic and Onions	12	.....
Ginger	16	.....
Gram	20	.....
Gums, in cases	.....	50
Gunny Bags and Gunny Cloth	.....	50
Gunjah	.....	50
Hemp	...	50
Hides, Buffalo, or Cow, cured	14	.....
Hoofs, Horn Shavings and Tips	20	.....
Horns, Cow, Buffalo, or Deer	20	.....
India Rubber, in bags	16	.....
,, cases	.....	50
Indigo	.....	50
Iron	20	.....
Jute	.....	50
Jute-Cuttings	.....	50
Lac Dye	.....	50
Lard	20 gross.	
Linseed	20	.....
Mace	.....	50
Machinery	20	.....
Metals	20	.....
Mathie Seed	18	.....
Mirabolams	16	.....
Molasses	2 puncheons or 4 hhds.	
Mother o'Pearl, in bags	20	.....
,, chests	20	.....
Munjeet	....	50
Mustard or Rape Seed	20	.....
Niger Seed	20	.....
Nutmegs, in cases or casks	.....	50

ARTICLES.	Cwt. per Ton Nett.	Cubic feet per Ton.
Nux Vomica	16	.....
Oats	16	.....
Oil, in cases	.....	50
„ casks	4 hhds. per chest.	
Opium		
Paddy	16	.....
Palmatine, in bags	16	.....
Peas	20	.....
Pepper, Long	12	.....
„ Black	14	.....
Planks and Deals	.....	50
Poppy Seed	20	.....
Putchuck	10	.....
Rags	.....	50
Raw Silk, in bales	10	.....
Rattans for dunnage	20	.....
Red Wood, ditto	20	.....
Rhea	.....	50
Rice	20	.....
Rope, in coils	.....	50
„ Lines and Twines in bundles ...	16	.....
Rum, in casks	2 puncheons or 4 hhds.	
Safflower	.....	50
Sago, in cases	.....	50
Sal-amoniac, in bags	20	.....
„ boxes	20 gross.	
Saltpetre	20	.....
Salt	20	.....
Sapan Wood for dunnage	20	.....
Sealing Wax, in cases	.....	50
Seed-lac, in cases	.....	50
„ bags	16	.....
Senna	.....	50
Shells, rough, in bags	20	.....
Shell-lac, in cases	.....	50
„ bags	16	.....
Silk Chussum	.....	50
„ Waste	.....	50
Silk Piece-Goods	.....	50
Skins	14	.....
Soap, country, in cases	.....	50
„ bags	15	.....
„ bar	20	.....
Stick Lac, in cases	.....	50
„ bags	16	.....

ARTICLES.	Cwt. per Ton Nett.	Cubic feet per Ton.
Sugar	20	.....
Tallow, in cases or casks	20	.....
Talc	20	.....
Tamarinds, in cases or casks.. ...	20	.....
Tapioca	.....	50
Tea	.....	50
Teel Seed	20	.....
Timber, round	.....	40
,, squared	.....	50
Tincal	20	.....
Tobacco, in bales	16	.....
Tortoise Shells, in chests	.....	50
Turmeric	16	.....
Wheat	20	.....
Wool	.....	50

1. Goods in Casks or Cases to be calculated gross weight when paying freight by weight; and where freight is made payable on measurement, the measurement be taken on the Custom House wharf, or other shipping wharf within a radius of 5 miles from the Custom House, except in the case of Cotton, the measurement of which shall be taken at the Screw-house.

2. Measurement to be taken at largest part of the bale,—inside the lashing on one side, and outside on the other.

3. Jute, Jute-cuttings, Hemp, Cotton, Safflower, and other articles similarly packed, are screwed in bales varying from 300 to 400lbs.

4. The term "dead weight" shall be understood to mean the following articles:—Sugar, Saltpetre, Rice, Wheat, Gram, Dholl, Peas, Linseed, Rapeseed and all Metals.

H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

SCHEDULE OF COMMISSION CHARGES

Revised and adopted by a Special General Meeting of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, held on the 18th June 1861,—with effect from 1st January 1862.

1.	On the sale, purchase, or shipment of Bullion, Gold Dust or Coin	1	per cent.
2.	On the purchase (when in funds) or sale of Indigo, Raw Silk, Silk Piece-Goods, Opium, Pearls, Precious Stones, or Jewellery	2½	„
3.	On purchasing ditto when funds are provided by the Agent	5	„
4.	On the sale or purchase of all other goods—the commission in all cases to be charged upon the gross amount of sales, and in regard to purchases upon both cost and charges ...	5	„
5.	On returns for Consignments if made in produce ...	2½	„
6.	On returns of Consignments if in Bills, Bullion, or Treasure	1	„
7.	On accepting Bills against Consignments ...	1	„
8.	On the sale or purchase of Ships, Factories, Houses, Lands, and all property of a like description ...	2½	„
9.	On goods and treasure consigned, and all other property of any description referred to Agency for sale, whether advanced upon or otherwise, which shall afterwards be withdrawn; and on goods consigned for conditional delivery to others and so delivered, on invoice amount at 2*s.* per rupee.	half com.	
10.	On making advances or procuring loans of money for commercial purposes, when the aggregate commission does not exceed 5 per cent. ...	2½	per cent.
11.	On ordering, or receiving and delivering goods, or superintending the fulfilment of contracts, or on the shipment of goods, where no other commission is derived	2½	„

12. On guaranteeing Bills, Bonds, or other engagements, and on becoming security for administration of Estates, or to Government for the disbursement of public money .. .. 2½ per cent.

13. On *del-credere*, or guaranteeing the due realization of sales ... . 2½ „

14. On the management of Estates for Executors or Administrators ... ... 2½ „

15. On chartering ships or engaging tonnage for constituents for vessels to proceed to outports for loading ... ... 2½ „

16. On advertising as the Agents for Owners or Commanders of ships for Cabin passengers, on the amount of passage money, whether the same shall pass through the Agent's hands or not ... 2½ „

17. On procuring freight for a ship by a shipping order or charter, or on procuring employment for a ship on monthly hire, or acting as Agents for owners, Captain, or charterers of a vessel, upon the gross amount of freight, brokerage inclusive ... 5 „

18. On engaging Asiatic Emigrants for a ship to the Mauritius, the West Indies, or elsewhere, upon the gross amount of earnings ... ... 5 „

19. On engaging troops for a ship to Great Britain or elsewhere, on the gross amount of passage money for rank and file ... ... 2½ „

20. On realising inward freight, inward troops, Emigrant, or Cabin passage money ... ... 2½ „

21. On landing and re-shipping goods from any vessel in distress, or on landing and selling by auction damaged goods from any such vessel, and acting as Agent for the Master on behalf of all concerned, on the declared value of all such goods as may be re-shipped, and on the nett proceeds of all such goods as may be publicly sold ... 5 „

If Opium, Indigo, Raw Silk, or Silk Piece-Goods ... 2½ „

If Treasure, Precious Stones, or Jewellery ... 1 „

22. On effecting Insurances, whether on lives or property ... ... 2½ per cent.
23. On settling Insurance claims, losses, and averages of all classes, and on procuring returns of premium ... ... 2½ „
24. On drawing, purchasing, selling, or negotiating Bills of Exchange ... ... 1 „
25. On debts or other claims when a process at law or arbitration is incurred in claiming them ... 2½ „
Or if recovered by such means ... ... 5 „
26. On Bills of Exchange returned dishonored ... 1 „
27. On collecting House Rent ... ... 2½ „
28. On ship's Disbursements ... ... 2½ „
29. On realising Bottomry Bonds, or negotiating any loan on *respondentia* ... ... 2½ „
30. On granting Letters of Credit ... ... 1 „
31. On sale or purchase of Government Securities and Bank or other Joint Stock Shares, and on every exchange or transfer not by purchase from one class to another ... ... ½ „
32. On delivering up Government Securities and Bank or other Joint Stock Shares, on the market value. ½ „
33. On all amounts debited and credited within the year (less the balance brought forward) upon which no commission amounting to 5 per cent. has been charged ... ... ½ „

☞ Brokerage when paid is to be separately charged.

H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

CONVERSION OF STERLING FREIGHT INTO INDIAN CURRENCY.

The following Resolutions were adopted at a General Meeting of the Chamber, held on the 31*st May* 1876.

"1. That the Resolution adopted at a Special General Meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, held on the 18th June 1861 is hereby superseded; that the conversion into Indian Currency of Sterling Freight payable in Calcutta on goods from Great Britain or any port or place where the freight is expressed in sterling money shall be made payable by an approved Bank Bill on demand, or at the rate for Bank Bills on London payable on demand, unless otherwise stipulated; that the rate ruling at the close of a mail shall be the rate applicable for such purpose during the week next ensuing; and that this Resolution shall have effect from the 1st January 1877."

2. That the words *current rate of Exchange* shall be held to mean the rate current for Bank Bills on London payable on demand, unless otherwise stipulated.

3. That the rate for Bank Bills on London payable on demand shall be taken for reducing sterling into Indian money in all cases of commission payable [redacted]alcutta on effecting charters for, or at, the ports of Akyab, [redacted], Rangoon, and Moulmein, for rice or timber; as well as in all cases of difference of freight payable at the said ports on re-charter or relet of tonnage, unless otherwise stipulated.

Forms of Bill of Lading and Boat Note as adopted at a General Meeting of the Chamber of Commerce on the 17th January 1880.

---

in good order and well conditioned,

by_____

in and upon the good Ship or Vessel called the_____

whereof is Master for this present Voyage_____

and now lying in the Port of Calcutta and bound for_____

_____

being marked and numbered as in the margin, and to be delivered, in the like good order and well conditioned, at the aforesaid Port of_____

(The Act of God, the Queen's Enemies, fire, and all and every other dangers and accidents of the Seas, Rivers, and Navigation of whatever nature and kind soever excepted)

unto_____

or to_____Assigns, Freight for the said Goods being payable as customary_____

_____

_____

with Average accustomed. In Witness whereof, the Master or Agents of the said Ship hath signed to_____Bills of Lading, all of this tenor and date, one of which being accomplished, the others to stand void.

Dated in CALCUTTA, this_____day of_____18 .

Weight and Contents unknown.

No.....

Calcutta,.....18.....

To

THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE

Ship.....

SIR,

Please receive on board the undernoted Goods from Messrs.....

and grant a clean receipt for the same.

N. B.—This cargo is only shipped on the special understanding that the Chief Officer will sign for all counter or quality marks and numbers, and the Bales or Packages are not to be taken on board except on these terms, and also when a Sircar is in attendance to check the tally.

In case of any dispute, the Shippers request prompt information in writing from one of the Officers of the ship.

Marks and Numbers.	Number of packages.	Description of Goods.	

No. .....

Calcutta, ... 18 .....

Received on board the ship ..... in good order and condition the undermentioned Goods from Messrs. .....

.....

N. B.—The Chief Officer is requested not to take in any package unless he is prepared to sign for all the qualifying marks and numbers.
All packages in bad order must be returned.

Marks and Numbers.	Number of packages.	Description of goods.	

Arrived alongside .....

Discharged .....

Returned .....

Remarks .....

(Signature) .....

Chief Officer.

Ship .....

Moorings .....

MEMBERS OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Aikman, J., Esq., *Acting Agent, Chartered Bank of India, Australia, and China.*
Agelasto, A. and Co.
Apcar and Co.
Anderson, Wright and Co.
Acerboni, F. and Co.
Barlow and Co.
Begg, Dunlop and Co.
Blackhall, W. S. D. Esq., *Manager, Agra Bank.*
Burn and Co.
Barry and Co.
Balmer, Lawrie and Co.
Carlisles, Nephews and Co.
Carritt and Co.
Campbell, J., Esq., *Manager, National Bank of India.*
Crooke, Rome and Co.
Cohn Brothers and Fuchs.
Duncan Brothers and Co.
Dwarkanath Dutt and Co.
Duffus, J., Esq.
Ede and Hobson.
Ernsthausen and Oesterley.
Ewing and Co.
Elliott, John and Co.
Ezra, E. D. J., Esq.
Finlay, Muir and Co.
Gisborne and Co.
Graham and Co.
Grindlay and Co.
Gubboy, Elias S., Esq.
Harper, G., Esq., *Agent, Oriental Bank Corporation.*
Henderson, George and Co.
Heilgers, F. W. and Co.
Herbert, C. H., Esq., *Agent, Chartered Mercantile Bank of India, London and China.*
Hoare, Miller and Co.
Huber and Co.
Jardine, Skinner and Co.
Kettlewell, Bullen and Co.
Kelly and Co.
Ker, Dods and Co.
King, Hamilton and Co.
Longmuir, T., Esq., *Manager, Delhi & London Bank, Limited.*
Morris, E., Esq., *Agent, Hong-Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation.*
Mackillican, J., and Co.
Mackinnon, Mackenzie and Co.
Mackenzie, Lyall and Co.
Macneill and Co.
Macknight, Anderson and Co.
McIntosh, A. R., and Co.
Moran, W., and Co.
Oldemeyer and Hadenfeldt.
Payn, T., Esq., *Manager, Comptoir d'Escompte de Paris.*
Petrocochino Brothers.
Prawnkissen Law and Co.
Prestage, F., Esq., *Agent, Eastern Bengal Railway Company.*
Pigott Chapman and Co.
Ralli Brothers.
Reinhold and Co.
Robert and Charriol.
Rentiers and Co.
Schroder, Smidt and Co.
Schoene, Kilburn and Co.
Sassoon, David, and Co.
Shaw, Finlayson and Co.
Steel, Octavius, and Co.
Thomas, J., and Co.
Turner, Morrison and Co.
Tamvaco and Co.
Tambaci, Paul and Son.
Ullmann, Hirschhorn and Co.
Wilkinson, Captain C. J., *Superintendent, P. & O. Company.*
Wilson, H. F., Esq., (*Mofussil.*)
Whitney, Brothers and Co.
Williamson, Magor and Co.
Wiseman, Mitchell, Reid and Co.
Yule, Andrew and Co.

Honorary Member :

J. A. Crawford, Esq., C. S., late Collector of Customs.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

OF THE

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

First ..... That the Society shall be styled "THE BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE."

Second... That the object and duty of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce shall be to watch over and protect the general commercial interests of the Presidency of Bengal, and specially those of the port of Calcutta; to employ all means within its power for the removal of evils, the redress of grievances, and the promotion of the common good; and, with that view, to communicate with Government, public authorities, associations, and individuals; to receive references from, and to arbitrate between, parties willing to abide by the judgment and decision of the Chamber; and to form a code of practice to simplify and facilitate transaction of business.

Third.... That merchants, bankers, ship-owners, and brokers shall be admissible as members of the Chamber.

Fourth... That candidates for admission as members of the Chamber shall be proposed and seconded by two members, and may

be elected by the Committee provisionally, such election being subject to confirmation at the next ensuing General Meeting.

Fifth..... That the subscription of firms and banks shall be 16 rupees per mensem, of individual members 10 rupees per mensem, and of mofussil members 32 rupees per annum.

Sixth..... That any member of the Chamber whose subscription shall be three months in arrears shall cease to be a member, and his name shall be removed by the Committee from the list of members after one month's notice of such default.

Seventh... That the business and funds of the Chamber shall be managed by a Committee of not less than five nor more than seven members, including the President and Vice-President, to be elected annually at a General Meeting of the Chamber in the month of May; the President, or, in his absence, the Vice-President, being ex-officio Chairma[illegible]he Committee, and in the absence of t[illegible]sident and Vice-President, the Committee to elect its own Chairman. Three to form a quorum.

Eighth... Annual electi[illegible]s of President, Vice-President, and members of the Com-

mittee shall be determined by a majority of votes of members, such votes being given in voting cards to be issued by the Secretary, numbered and bearing his signature; and no voting card shall be received for such purpose unless so authenticated. All vacancies created by the absence of the President, or Vice-President, from the Presidency for three months, or by departure for Europe, or by death, shall be forthwith filled up, and the election determined by votes to be taken as above and declared by the Committee. All vacancies created as above by the absence, departure, or death of any of the members of the Committee shall be forthwith filled up by selection by the Committee, subject to approval at first ordinary general meeting thereafter.

☞ *It is specially requested that before a member is returned to serve on the Committee, his nominator shall have ascertained his willingness to accept office in the event of his election by voting cards.*

Ninth..... That parties holding powers of procuration shall, in the absence of their principals, be eligible to serve as members of the Committee.

Tenth..... Two members of a firm or representatives of a bank shall not serve on the Committee at the same time.

Eleventh. That the Committee shall meet for the purpose of transacting such business as may come within the province of the Chamber at such times as may suit their convenience, and that the record of their proceedings be open to the inspection of members, subject to such regulations as the Committee may deem expedient.

Twelfth. That all proceedings of the Committee be subject to approval or otherwise of General Meetings duly convened.

Thirteenth. That a half-yearly report of the proceedings of the Committee be prepared, printed, and circulated for information of members three days previous to the General Meeting at which such report and proceedings of the Committee shall be submitted for approval.

Fourteenth. That the Secretary shall be elected by the Committee, such election to be subject to confirmation at the next ensuing General Meeting.

Fifteenth. That General Meetings of the Chamber shall be held at such times as the Com-

mittee may consider convenient for the despatch of business.

Sixteenth. That any number of members present shall be held to constitute a General Meeting, called in conformity with the Rules of the Chamber for the despatch of ordinary business.

Seventeenth. That on the requisition of any five members of the Chamber, the President, or, in his absence, the Vice-President, or Chairman of Committee, shall call a Special General Meeting, to be held within 15 days subsequent to receipt of such requisition.

Eighteenth. That every subscribing firm or bank shall be entitled to one vote only, and that the Chairman of Committee and Chairman of General Meetings and Special General Meetings shall have a casting vote in cases of equality of votes.

Nineteenth. That parties holding powers of procuration shall, in the absence of their principals, be entitled to vote.

Twentieth. That voting by proxy shall be allowed; provided the votes are in favour of members of the Chamber.

Twenty-first. That the Chamber reserves to itself the right of expelling any of its members;

such expulsion to be decided by the votes of three-fourths of members present in person or by proxy at any Special General Meeting of the Chamber convened for the consideration of such expulsion.

Twenty-second. That strangers visiting the Presidency may be admitted by the Committee as honorary members for a period not exceeding two months.

Twenty-third. That no change in the rules and regulations of the Chamber shall be made, except by the votes of a majority of the members of the Chamber present in person or by proxy at a Special General Meeting to be held after previous notice of three months.

Printed by Tho[redacted]Bentinck Street.

REPORT

OF

THE COMMITTEE

OF THE

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

For the half-year ended 30th April 1881.

CALCUTTA:
PRINTED BY THOMAS S. SMITH, CITY PRESS,
12, BENTINCK STREET.

1881.

BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
Royal Asiatic Society.
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BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Report of the Committee for the half-year ended 30th April 1881.

THE Committee submit their Report on the principal subjects which have had their attention during the past half-year.

ADDRESS TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY.

The Committee, after ascertaining the wishes of the members of the Chamber, drew up an address of welcome and congratulation to His Excellency the Marquis of Ripon, intending to present it on his arrival in Calcutta. Owing to His Lordship's state of health, the result of a severe illness contracted at Bombay, it was thought best not to trouble him with an audience, and the address was therefore forwarded through his Private Secretary. His Excellency's gracious reply was received shortly afterwards, and is given below.

To His Excellency

The Most Honorable THE MARQUIS OF RIPON,

K.G., P.C., G.M.S.I.,

Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

May it Please Your Excellency,

We, the President, Vice-President, and Members of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, desire respectfully to offer our cordial congratulations on Your Lordship's accession to the high office which Her Majesty has been pleased to place in your hands, and our hearty welcome on Your Excellency's arrival in the Capital of British India.

In common with all classes of Her Majesty's subjects, we received with deep regret and anxiety the announcement of Your Lordship's very serious illness, and we share the general feeling of thankfulness and satisfaction at a recovery which we trust may prove to be complete.

In conferring upon Your Lordship the distinguished appointment of Representative of the Queen-Empress of India, we recognise the wisdom of Her Majesty and Her regard for the welfare of the people over whom Your Lordship has been chosen to rule; and we hail with satisfaction Your Lordship's succession to the series of illustrious statesmen who have administered the Government of this Empire.

It is a matter of gratification that Your Excellency's assumption of the office of Viceroy and Governor-General has been preceded by an intimate experience of the administrative conduct and control of all that concerns the political, economical, and social circumstances of this

country; and the earnest interest which Your Lordship has at all times manifested in the continual development of the progress and prosperity of India justifies the well-founded hope we entertain for the success of Your Excellency's Administration.

We rejoice that Your Excellency's career in India should commence at a time when in most parts of the country the people are being blessed with abundant harvests. In an agricultural land, such as this, the welfare and condition of the people are so dependent on favorable seasons, that nowhere else do good crops produce such wide-spread benefit, or their failure so materially affect the general well-being.

Your Excellency is well aware of the grievous and disastrous effects of the latter condition upon the people who are exposed to the terrible visitation of famine, and of the consequent pressure upon the finances of the country caused by the obligation to provide relief and protection for the sufferers. Periodical seasons of excessive scarcity are calamities to which the experience of the past points as of inevitable recurrence; and we are confident that Your Excellency will not fail to adopt all possible precautions with the view to contend successfully against them and to minimise the suffering and mortality which they involve.

We congratulate Your Excellency upon the termination of the war in Afghanistan, and are fully assured that Your Lordship, in dealing with the many difficult questions which are the natural issue of that war, will take such steps as may be deemed best calculated to promote peace and preserve the honor of the country.

The efficient administration of the imperial revenue is at all times a matter of the weightiest and most anxious consideration for the Government. National interests and national prosperity depend materially upon a wise and prudent policy in the conduct of public finance, and the conviction of its soundness and integrity tends to reconcile the community to such measures of taxation as may be deemed essential for the maintenance of the public service.

We regret that the finances of the State were not, when Your Lordship assumed the Government of India, in such a satisfactory condition as could have been desired; but we are confident that by the exercise of a judicious and watchful economy a marked improvement will result. We have received with satisfaction the announcement by the Secretary of State that Her Majesty's Government have decided to contribute a substantial share of the heavy cost of the late war.

We earnestly hope that during the Viceroyalty of Your Excellency commerce in all its branches may be so encouraged and protected by wise legislation, by the improvement of internal transit, by the expansion of railway communication, by works of irrigation, and other material means of progress, that the freest scope may be given to the industry and enterprise of all who are engaged in developing the resources of the country.

On this occasion we abstain from pressing upon Your Excellency's attention any of the various subjects affecting the commerce of this Port and in which the mercantile community are more particularly interested; but we do not doubt that any representations which we may here-

after submit will receive from Your Lordship in Council the consideration which they may seem to merit.

In closing this Address we express our trust that Your Excellency may now enjoy uninterrupted health and strength for the performance of the arduous duties and labors of your exalted position; and that when the time arrives for retirement from the cares and responsibilities of your administration, Your Lordship may have reason, under God's blessing, to look back with pride and satisfaction to that portion of your life which has been devoted to the advancement of the happiness and prosperity of the many millions committed to your charge, and in whose appreciation of the benefits conferred by Your Excellency's Rule, will be found the highest reward that national gratitude can bestow.

We tender to Your Lordship the assurance of our profound respect, and have the honor to remain,

MY LORD MARQUIS,

Your Excellency's most obedient and faithful servants,

WALTER EWING CRUM, *President.*
JOHN MORISON, *Vice-President.*
H. B. H. TURNER,
J. W. O'KEEFE,
W. BLEECK,
W. H. CHEETHAM,
G. G. RISO,

For and on behalf of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 11th January 1881.

Government House,

Calcutta, February the 2nd, 1881.

GENTLEMEN,

I thank you very much for the Address which you have presented to me upon my arrival in your City, and I am especially grateful for the kind expressions contained in it on the subject of my recent illness, from which, through God's mercy, I have now recovered.

It is true, as you are good enough to remark, that my attention has been given for many years to the affairs of India, and while any experience which I may have gained in the past will I trust not be without its utility to me in the responsible position which I now fill, I shall ever be ready to supplement and to correct it in accordance with existing facts and with the requirements of the present time.

I rejoice with you that the late harvest has been almost without exception of an abundant character and that the prospect of the spring crops is good ; but I fully recognise that one of the most important tasks which devolve at the present time on the Government of India is the adoption and promotion of sound and judicious measures for the prevention of Famine.

The return of peace will happily enable my colleagues and myself to devote our whole attention to questions relating to the welfare of the people and the development of the resources of the country, and I shall at all times be ready to give the most careful consideration to any repre-

sentations which you may desire to make to me upon these or any other subjects.

I am, Gentlemen,
Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) RIPON.

THE BUDGET FOR 1881-82.

The Annual Financial Statement was published on the 25th March 1881, and the Summary as telegraphed by Government to the Secretary of State is here introduced for Record and Reference.

ACCOUNTS, 1879-80.—Revenue 68,485,000. Expenditure 69,668,000. Deficit 1,183,000. Including Frontier and Punjab Northern Railways 6,125,000 war expenditure brought to account, of which 335,000 contributed by Local Governments, leaving Imperial surplus, exclusive of war, 4,607,000. Capital Expenditure on Productive Public Works 3,364,000, besides foregoing 69,688,000.

WAR EXPENDITURE proper to end 1880-81 estimated 16,605,000. Provision made in 1881-82 for 2,210,000, war expenditure on basis evacuation Southern Afghanistan being complete by end of May. Of this sum 270,000 for compensation for loss camels and horses remaining unpaid from 1880-81. Total net cost of war now estimated 18,815,000, equals at 1*s.* 8*d.* the rupee 15,680,000 true sterling, exclusive Frontier Railways, which are estimated at 4,477,000 or true sterling 3,730,500 net, and exclusive Punjab Northern Railway 1,019,000 or 849,000 true sterling.

English contribution credited at once, namely, two millions 1880-81 and three millions 1881-82. Military expenditure in Regular and Budget based on Treasury transactions, not as before on audited expenditure. Various reforms in system of account indicated. Independent appropriation audit under consideration.

REGULAR ESTIMATES, 1880-81.—Revenue 70,768,000, including two millions English contribution. Expenditure 77,037,000. Deficit 6,269,000. Expenditure includes four millions, which, under former system account, would have appeared in 1881-82. Including Frontier and Punjab Northern Railways, 11,665,000 net war expenditure included in Regular Estimate. Excluding War Expenditure Surplus, 1880-81, 5,396,000. Capital Expenditure on Productive Public Works 2,816,000.

BUDGET ESTIMATES, 1881-82.—Revenue 70,981,000. Expenditure 70,126,000. Surplus 855,000. Revenue includes three millions English contribution. Expenditure includes 2,210,000 War Expenditure proper, and 790,000 Frontier Railways. Total three millions. Therefore net result Budget unaffected by war. Expenditure includes 1,500,000 Famine Insurance, namely, 750,000 for Protective Works, details given, and 750,000 for reduction sterling debt. Commission reduction debt to be appointed in this connection. Precise duties and composition under consideration. Opium Estimate 6,500,000 net. Capital Expenditure Productive Public Works 2,608,000, namely, 108,000 unexpended balance of former years, and 2,500,000 fixed yearly grant.

Intention announced under usual reserve to remit home 17,200,000 true sterling, 1881-82, and raise Indian loan

three millions. Terms and date of loan to be announced hereafter.

Statement dwells at length on Productive Public Works question, approving policy limiting Government expenditure to 2,500,000 annually. Hopes that private enterprise will construct railways. Commencement made by Company formed under auspices Messrs. Rothschild undertaking construction, Calcutta Khoolna Railway.

Statement concludes with general observations. When once relieved from strain war expenditure, no cause for anxiety as to current finance. Actual position prosperous; but future possibilities, arising from increase of home liabilities, precarious opium, revenue and economic problem of over-population, render strict economy necessary. Points to which Government can now most usefully direct attention, reduction, Military expenditure and encouragement private enterprise by all legitimate means. Any fiscal reforms must be postponed till Afghan complications are over.

THE LICENSE TAX.

It will be seen that the Committee have again addressed the Government on the subject of the exemption of the official and professional classes from the incidence of the tax, reiterating their opinion that all classes, with incomes above a certain limit, should bear their fair share of the burden. The arguments against the partial nature of the tax are so unanswerable, and they have

been so often stated, that they need not be repeated here. The letter of the Government of India, dated 5th March 1881, gives hope that the justice of the case will now be considered, and be acted on when the next financial arrangements are being made.

The Committee trust that the day is not far distant when the tax, to which there are so many objections, may be given up altogether.

From Chamber to Government of India.

Calcutta, 21st February 1881.

Nearly 3 years ago (23rd March 1878) the Chamber of Commerce submitted to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India a Memorial with reference to the exceptional character of the License Tax which had been recently introduced in Bengal by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor with the sanction of His Excellency the Governor-General in Council.

The Committee, whilst acknowledging the necessity for making special provision to meet the exceptional charges that might in the future be incurred in years of famine without encroaching on the revenue required for "ordinary" State expenditure, and whilst expressing the readiness of the mercantile and trading classes to bear their fair share of the taxation required for making such

provision, expressed the opinion that the action of Government was a departure from those principles of equity which should govern financial administration, inasmuch as the Act threw on certain classes of the public only a burden which should have been distributed amongst all alike.

Last year a Bill, called the "Trades and Professions Tax Bill," was introduced into the Legislative Council. It was intended to supersede the License Tax; but the Committee of the Chamber, considering it to be virtually an Income Tax and open both in principle and detail to many very serious objections, were compelled to enter their protest against it.

This Bill, however, provided that the salaried and professional classes should bear their share of taxation, a principle for which the Chamber of Commerce had so long contended; but it was subsequently withdrawn, and the License Tax reintroduced almost entirely in its original form, with however one desirable change in the exemption of those whose annual incomes did not exceed Rs. 500.

His Excellency the Governor-General and the Finance Minister, whilst seeming to admit that the contention of the Chamber was reasonable, did not think it desirable at that time to extend the tax to the salaried and professional classess, for reasons which were explained in their Budget speeches.

The Committee of the Chamber now desire respectfully to submit, for the consideration of His Excellency the

Governor-General in Council, that the objections which have been from time to time advanced against the License Tax, and more especially its exceptional character, are still felt as strongly as ever, and they would gladly see the abolition of a tax which has proved to be not only vexatious and unpopular, but in its assessment and collection unjust and oppressive.

If, however, the financial position should not admit of this, the Committee desire respectfully to urge the removal of the existing inequality, and the establishment of the principle that all classes of Her Majesty's subjects, who alike share in the advantages which accrue from the necessary expenditure of the State, should proportionately, when able to do so, contribute their share of whatever taxation it may be found necessary to impose on the country; thus removing, especially from the native mind, the belief that specially selected classes of Europeans are exempted from taxation in opposition to those principles of justice which happily characterise the action of Her Majesty's Government at home and abroad.

From Government of India to Chamber.

No. 1033, *Calcutta, 5th March* 1881.

I have laid before the Governor-General in Council your letter dated 21st February 1881, urging the abolition of the License Tax, and suggesting that, if this is not possible, the tax should be extended to all classes of the population. In reply, I am directed to say, for the information of the Chamber, that the subject of your

communication will receive the careful consideration of the Government of India.

REVISION OF THE CUSTOMS TARIFF.

At the annual revision of the Customs tariff at which Mr. J. W. O'Keefe, a member of the Committee, represented the Chamber, no important alterations were made. In accordance with the Chambers' letter to the Government of India of 30th August last, the duty on steel is now leviable *ad valorem*. The schedule referring to the smaller sizes of umbrellas, and especially to what are termed parasols and sunshades, has been revised and made more equitable.

From Chamber to Government of India.

Calcutta, 14th December 1880.

Schedule A. of the Indian Tariff Act XVI of 1875, specifying the articles subject to duty on importation, provides that steel-ribbed and cane-ribbed cotton umbrellas shall be liable to a duty of 5 per cent. on tariff values of 13 annas and 12 annas each respectively, and "all other sorts" to 5 per cent. "ad-valorem."

But it has been represented to the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, that importers of cotton parasols and sunshades—worth about 5 rupees a dozen, or 7 annas

each—have been informed by the Collector of Customs that the term "umbrellas" applies also to these cheaper classes of goods, which, under his ruling, have been assessed for duty on a value nearly double their market price; so that, practically, importers are paying about 10 per cent.

It appears to the Committee that the Collector's practice to include parasols and sunshades under the tariff item of umbrellas is not only unfair to importers of the former descriptions, but is in disregard of the provision of the Tariff Act, which declares that "all other sorts" than those specified for a fixed tariff valuation shall pay duty "ad-valorem."

If the Collector's ruling and practice are in order, the Act includes a provision which cannot be applied nor availed of, and is simply an inoperative introduction of an unmeaning item, which the Committee apprehend was not the intention of the Government, nor do they so interpret it.

The Committee believe that the term "all other sorts" was purposely employed to cover all descriptions of umbrellas except those specified; and; if the Act is to be strictly adhered to, they submit that all unspecified kinds should be exempt from duty on the values assigned for articles of absolutely greater price, and liable only for duty on the actual market rate of the day.

The Committee therefore trust that orders may be issued to restrain the Collector's action within the limits of the Act, if their interpretation of it has the approval and concurrence of the Government of India.

From Collector of Customs to Chamber.

No. 260, *dated the* 20*th January* 1881.

A copy of your Chamber's letter dated 14th December 1880, to the address of the Secretary, Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department, has been forwarded for report.

With respect to the question raised therein, I should be obliged if the Chamber will inform me how they would propose to distinguish between umbrellas, sunshades and parasols, and if size be considered the standard of distinction, what limits should be assigned to the different classes of protectors against the heat or rays of the sun.

2. I may take this opportunity of observing that this subject has never been mooted at any of the various Tariff Committees, and the practice of charging 5% duty on tariff values of 13 and 12 annas respectively has been pursued ever since 1875 without any objection being raised; but that it is only applied to articles of the nature of umbrellas when, as provided in the tariff, they are composed of *cotton with either steel or cane ribs.* The Chamber apparently are not aware that the provisions of the tariff have been simply adhered to, and that parasols, &c., when composed of other materials, which do not fall under the provisions of the tariff, are dealt with *ad-valorem* in the manner proposed by them.

3. There has therefore not been any action taken by the Customs authorities other than that prescribed by the tariff, and the Chamber of Commerce, no doubt, will

be glad to correct their impressions that any interpretation has been given to the words of the Act other than that which was intended, and that the action of this office is beyond the limits of the Act.

4. I shall be obliged by an early reply in order to enable me to complete my report to Government.

From Chamber to Collector of Customs.

Calcutta, 22nd February 1881.

In reply to your letter No. 260 of the 20th ultimo—the delayed acknowledgment of which the Committee of the Chamber much regret—I am directed to state that Mr. O'Keefe, the commercial representative on the Committee appointed to revise the tariff valuations, is in possession of the Chamber's views as to the mode in which umbrellas, sunshades, and parasols should be assessed for duty, and no doubt he has submitted them for your consideration.

The Committee have read with interest your explanation of the provision of the tariff as regards those articles, and they see that you think they were mistaken in supposing that the term "all other sorts" applied exclusively to parasols, and that these, according to your reading of the Customs Act, are, if made of cotton and steel, or cane-ribbed, subjcet to the tariff valuation.

The Committee feel sure that it cannot have been the intention of the Legislature to have an equal tariff *value* for umbrellas and parasols—the latter probably *half* the value of the other.

From Government of India to Chamber.

No. 109c. *Calcutta, the* 15*th March* 1881.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th December last, regarding the treatment of cotton parasols and sunshades for the levy of customs duty, and in reply to refer you to the Notification published in the *Gazette of India,* Extraordinary, dated the 10th instant No. 101c, under which cotton umbrellas under 20 inches are valued for assessment of duty at 7 annas each.

LABOR DISTRICTS BILL.

The subject of facilitating the supply of emigrant labor to the Tea districts of the Assam Province, and amending the law which now regulates the relations of employers and laborers in these districts, was referred in December last by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, with the approval of the Governor-General in Council, to a Commission composed of four official and four non-official members.

The Commission issued their report and draft of a Bill which they recommended should be forthwith passed into law. As the proposed legislation affected not only Bengal but districts not under the jurisdiction of the Bengal Government, the Council of the Lieutenant-Governor

were unable to deal with it, and it was hoped, in view of the urgency of the measure, that the Governor-General's Council would have disposed of the matter during the cold weather session in Calcutta. As this was not done, the Committee have addressed the Supreme Government on the subject in the communication which follows, but to which no reply has as yet been received.

From Chamber to Government of India.

Calcutta, 13*th April* 1881.

I am desired by the Committee of the Chamber to address you with reference to the Report of the Commission on the Labor Districts Emigration Act, which was published in the *Calcutta Gazette* of 26th January last, and which, the Committee are given to understand, was made over to your Department by the Government of Bengal, together with the Draft of a Bill to amend the Labor Districts Emigration Act VII (B.C.) of 1873, prepared by the Commission, in order that steps might be taken to move the Council of the Governor-General of India to take the Bill into their consideration.

These papers have now been before the public for nearly three months, so that ample time has elapsed for an expression of the opinion of those interested in regard to the legislation proposed. So far as is known to the Committee, the recommendations of the Commission and the Draft Bill prepared by them have met with the almost

unanimous approval of those, both in this country and in England, whose interests are affected by the proposed changes in the law, while no expressions of disapproval of any moment have so far been heard of by the Committee on the part of others who, although not directly interested, are well qualified to judge of the matters in question.

It has been pointed out to the Committee, that if legislation is delayed until the Supreme Council assembles in Calcutta next cold weather, the Tea interest, which is at present struggling under difficulties of the gravest character, will be denied for a period of nearly two years the relief to which the Commission say it is entitled. Tea gardens will have to make their recruiting arrangements for next season during the months of July, August, and September, and it is therefore of the utmost importance to them that any contemplated changes in the present law should be given effect to before the end of June at the latest, if they are to derive any benefit from them during the season of 1882.

The Committee trust therefore that no avoidable delay will occur in introducing the Bill into the Governor-General's Council, with a view to the passing of the measure into law at an early date.

INSOLVENT DEBTORS' BILL.

The Committee's reply to the invitation of the Government of Bengal to give an expression of opinion on the provisions of this proposed measure

conveys their views on the subject. In the judgment of the Committee the Bill falls far short of a sufficiently comprehensive measure of insolvency reform; they have recorded their disappointment and have deprecated its adoption in its present meagre state, being satisfied that it must ere long be replaced by a more general enactment, so framed as to embrace many other points of importance to the commercial public with which the Bill fails to deal.

The principal provision of the Bill is contained in the 5th section, which requires that whenever any persons trading in partnership together have possession of goods committed to them for sale by the true owner, and any one of such persons is adjudicated an insolvent, such property shall become vested in the Official Assignee of the Insolvent Court for the purpose of paying, so far as may be required, the joint-creditors of the partnership.

The Committee have protested against such an unjust dealing with the property of consignors, whose rights should rather be carefully protected and preserved than dealt with as proposed by the Bill.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.

No. 718 *J. dated Calcutta, the* 14*th February* 1881.

Judicial.

I am directed to forward the accompanying copy of a Bill for the amendment of the law relating to Insolvent Debtors in India, with the Statement of Objects and Reasons, and to request that the Lieutenant-Governor may be favored with an expression of the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce on the provisions of the Bill.

2. I am to ask that your reply may be sent before the 25th instant.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 1st March 1881.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 718 J. of the 14th ultimo, forwarding draft of a Bill for the amendment of the law relating to Insolvent Debtors in India, with a Statement of Objects and Reasons, and requesting the opinion of the Chamber on the provisions of the Bill.

Some of the points with which the Bill professes to deal are, no doubt, important, but there are others of equal if not of greater interest,—such as the question of providing, under certain circumstances and with necessary limitations, for the administration of mercantile estates through mercantile trustees, instead of the more lengthy, expensive, and generally less satisfactory method which

the law in its present form requires—which are altogether neglected.

The mercantile community have long been expecting from Government a really comprehensive measure of Insolvency reform which would, at any rate in the Presidency towns, put the administration of insolvents' estates upon the same footing as that existing in other countries, and the present meagre measure has therefore given very great disappointment. Hence the Committee deprecate the passing of this Act, as they imagine that its existence can only be temporary, and that it must very soon be replaced by a general and important measure framed to meet present requirements.

In obedience, however, to the wishes of the Lieutenant-Governor, the Committee have carefully considered the Bill which has been submitted to them, and they desire me to offer the following remarks:—

Section 2.—The repetition of the words "under the provisions" is apparently a clerical error.

Section 3.—This provision is, the Committee think, a useful one if confined to attachments before judgment; but they have very high authority for saying that no sufficient reason can be alleged for extending it so as to deprive judgment creditors of an advantage which they may have fairly earned.

Section 4.—"*Such* Insolvent" should apparently be "*an* Insolvent." The operation of the section *should* be also curtailed as in the case of Section 3.

Section 5.—The words "or obtains a vesting order on his petition" are unnecessary. The repetition of "for the purpose" is a clerical error.

This section is of course the principal provision in the Bill, and in its present shape appears to the Committee to be most objectionable.

Under the existing Bankruptcy Law, when one member of a firm becomes insolvent, whilst the others have not gone into the Insolvent Court, goods or chattels left in the order and disposition of the firm do not pass to the Official Assignee; and under this law it may happen that a firm really insolvent, but owing to the possession of such goods appearing to be wealthy, would be permitted, by reason of one of its partners, whether in consequence of his infancy or of his absence from India, not having sought the protection of the Insolvent Court, to return such goods to their true owner. When such goods had been left in the hands of the practically insolvent firm, simply with the object of enabling it to maintain a false appearance of wealth, it is not just that they should pass back to the true owner, and that he should so escape all punishment for an action which may have caused ruin to others.

Had the present Bill provided for cases of this kind, the Committee might have approved the wisdom of the legislation, but they are advised that it does not do so. The words "*so far as may be required*" may be intended to confine the operation of the section to cases in which all the partners are in insolvent circumstances, but, if so, the Committee very much doubt whether such meaning is sufficiently clear.

The operation of the section should be expressly confined to cases in which all the partners are really in insolvent circumstances, but where, owing to causes such as those above alluded to, they are not all made insolvents at the same time.

If this be not done, very great injustice must result. One partner of a wealthy firm may, by his own extravagance, or by gambling and speculation, apart altogether from the business of the firm, become insolvent. In such circumstances, the present Bill seems to provide that the Official Assignee may take possession of all goods or chattels left in the order and disposition of the still solvent firm for application in payment of the creditors of that firm. The consequences which might follow, and the injustice which might result, are so apparent that they need not be described.

The Committee apprehend that the words "in the order and disposition of a firm," may be taken as applying to goods consigned for sale to that firm by the owner on his own account, a procedure which forms a large part of the business at Indian Ports. It seems to the Committee manifestly unfair and unreasonable that such goods, in cases where there can be no suspicion even of their being lent for the purpose of keeping up a false appearance of wealth, should, on the insolvency of either a firm or member of a firm, be taken possession of by the Official Assignee for any purpose whatsoever, and they cannot too strongly urge that, in any proposed Insolvency Bill, the rights of such consignors should be most jealously guarded, and that they should even be protected from all inconvenience.

Section 7.—The Committee see no reason why dividends unclaimed for a period of six years should cease to be the property of their rightful owner or his heirs. It may be desirable to limit the period after which unclaimed dividends are recoverable in order to facilitate the final winding-up of estates, but, if so, the period might be extended to 15 years. The Committee think, moreover, that instead of a mere publication in the local Gazette, the addresses of creditors should be registered, and that they should be advised by letter when dividends are to be paid.

BILL TO AMEND THE LAW RELATING TO BILLS OF EXCHANGE, CHEQUES, AND PROMISSORY NOTES.

It will be seen by the Committee's letter, in reply to the Government of Bengal, that they concurred in the opinion expressed by the Select Committee of the Legislative Council of the Governor-General that the Bill was not likely to be further improved without experience of its practical working, but that it might be revised after its provisions had been tested for a year or two; and they suggested the desirability of following, as closely as circumstances would admit, the law of England on the subject.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.

No. $\frac{430}{17}$. *Calcutta, the 16th February* 1881.

I am directed to forward herewith a copy of the Bill to define and amend the law relating to promissory notes, bills of exchange, and cheques, together with a copy of the fourth Report of the Select Committee thereon, and to request that you will move the Chamber of Commerce to favor the Lieutenant-Governor, as soon as possible, with any remarks that the Chamber may have to offer on the provisions of the Bill.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 9th March 1881.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No $\frac{430}{17}$ of 16th February, handing copy of a Bill to define and amend the law relating to promissory notes, bills of exchange, and cheques, and asking for any remarks the Committee may have to offer on the provisions of the Bill.

The Committee desire me to say that they find little to add to the observations which they had the honor of submitting to the Government of Bengal in their letter dated 18th February 1878.

They agree with the Select Committee that the Bill is not likely to be further improved without the experience derived from actual operation, and they would suggest that a further revision should be made after the Act has been in force for a year or two, by which time its

provisions will have been fairly tested, and any inherent defects will have become apparent.

I would only add that the Committee think it desirable that, so far as circumstances will permit, the law of India on this subject should follow closely that of England.

FACTORIES BILL.

The Bill to regulate labor in factories, notwithstanding the numerous protests made against it, has become law, but at the instance of the Committee and others it has been divested of several of its most objectionable provisions, and it is believed that, in its present form, it will not be found in practice to interfere much or prejudicially with the labor employed in the mills in this Presidency.

From Chamber to Government of India.

Calcutta, 9th March 1881.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce having observed that the report of the Select Committee on the Bill to regulate labor in Factories is to be taken into consideration at the next meeting of the Vice-regal Legislative Council to be held on Friday next, desire me respectfully to draw the attention of the Government of India

to the accompanying copies of correspondence and memorial which were addressed to the Government of Bengal on 14th July 1880.

The Committee have not, with the greater experience which time has afforded them of studying the subject, seen any reason to modify the views which have already been expressed on behalf of the Chamber.

In their opinion the proposed measure is unnecessary in so far as regards this Presidency, and they respectfully submit that, since there have not been any good reasons advanced for the necessity of legislation, the operation of the Bill, if it is to be passed, should be limited to those Presidencies where it may have been shewn to be called for in the interests of the laboring classes.

THE TRADE-MARKS BILL.

The Committee are glad to record that the legislation on this subject, to which they have strongly objected from the first, is likely to be confined to the registration in England of any Indian trade-marks where the owners wish to protect their rights. There will therefore be no disturbance in India of the rights of owners of English trade-marks which have been duly registered at home; and this, as the Committee have held all along, is as it should be.

From Government of India to Chamber.

Dated Fort William, the 3rd February, 1881.

The members of the Select Committee on the Bill to provide for the registration of trade-marks have now considered the opinions received on their report of the 28th February 1880, and have directed me to send, for the information of your Chamber, the following statement of the present position of the question as to the best mode of fitting-in the Indian system of registration with that established in England; and to request that any remarks or suggestions the Chamber may desire to make may be forwarded so as to reach me not later than the 1st March.

2. Taking in their order the various propositions which have been put forward for the solution of that question, and beginning with the proposition to restrict the Indian registration to trade-marks used in connection with Indian products, the Committee find that the opinions received from authorities, both in this country and in England, go to support them in their rejection of any scheme so limited.

3. The same may be said, though the difference of opinion is here greater, of the proposal that trade-marks registered in England should be placed upon the register here, and allowed all the benefits of registration as a matter of course, and without any previous notice or inquiry; indeed, as one of the Judges of the Calcutta High Court points out, there is an insuperable obstacle to the adoption of any such proposal in the circumstance that

one man may be the true owner of a trade-mark in England and another in India.

4. As regards the solution of the question proposed by the Committee themselves, they regret to find that it too has failed to commend itself to most of the authorities consulted. It has been objected to not only on account of the mechanical difficulties it would involve and the expense it would occasion, but also on the ground that the distinctive incription or device to be added to the mark might sometimes, in the case of a well-known Indian mark, so completely destroy the identity of the mark as to deprive it of most of its value to the owner; and might, on the other hand, in some cases where an Indian manufacturer adopted a well-known English mark with the device or inscription superadded, so little affect the appearance of the mark, that the injury done to the English owner would be scarcely less than if his mark were used without the addition.

5. The Committee have no wish to press their suggestion in the face of such objections, and accordingly, if they were to carry out the views expressed in the 14th paragraph of their report, the only course left would be to restore the Bill to its original shape, and require all English trade-marks to be registered afresh in India, the only concessions made in regard to them being, that suggested in the report, and, perhaps a reduction of the fees.

This is the course recommended by several of the authorties consulted, and among others by the Commissioners of Patents, who must be regarded as the highest

authority on this question, and it would apparently be accepted by the Bombay Chamber of Commerce; but the registration here of all English trade-marks used or likely to be used in India appears to the Committee so formidable an undertaking, that they are reluctant to adopt any course which would necessitate it as long as there is a prospect of finding any simpler solution of the question.

6. Such a solution, it need hardly be said, would be found if Indian manufacturers would be content to register their marks in England. The Committee abstained from suggesting this solution in their report, partly because it involved a complete departure from the original scheme of the Bill, and partly because they did not venture to hope that it would find favour with Indian manufacturers and traders. They observe, however, from the papers now before them, that this course is, as a matter of fact, recommended by the Calcutta and Bombay Chambers of Commerce, and also by the Liverpool Incorporated Chamber, and they accordingly deem it worthy of the most careful consideration.

7. In the event of its being adopted, the legislation required here would be of the simplest description. As all the work of registration, including the settlement of disputes as to the right to register and claims for the rectification of the register, would be performed in England, all the provisions relating to these subjects would be removed from the Bill, and the Act to be passed here would simply provide—

1*st*,—that no proceedings should be instituted here for the protection of a trade-mark unless such mark

was registered in England as belonging to the plaintiff, or registration was refused in the particular class of cases refered to by 39 & 40 Vict., cap. 33;

2ndly,—that in all Courts in British India, registration in England should be from the first *prima facie* proof, and after five years, conclusive proof of the right to a trade-mark.

8. There is only one point as to which a difficulty might conceivably arise, and it is this:—as your Chamber is aware, one of the objects at which the English Acts of 1875-76 aim is to prevent the adoption in future of certain descriptions of trade-marks which, though recognized by the common law, were found to give rise to difficulties and disputes—marks, *e. g.*, consisting of fancy names, such as "pectorine" and "lactopeptine." In regard to such marks the English Act of 1875 provides that they may be registered if they were used as trade-marks before the passing of the Act, *i.e.*, before the 13th August 1875, and not otherwise. Now, the Committee, looking to the wording of the Act and the forms prescribed under it, see no reason to suppose that use in India before the 13th August 1875, would not be sufficient to entitle such a mark of registration under the Act; but it is quite clear that such a mark used for the first time after the 13th August 1875, would be excluded, and accordingly any persons who may have adopted such marks in India subsequent to that date might, if the Bill was framed on the lines now suggested, have ground for complaint.

9. I am accordingly to inquire whether your Chamber consider it probable that there are in use in this country any number of trade-marks worth speaking of adopted since the date in question, and not containing any of the "essential particulars" mentioned in clauses (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*) of section 5 of the Bill No. II, but of such a nature as to be entitled to protection here under the existing law, and, if so, whether they can suggest any mode of saving the rights of the owners of such marks. If the number of such marks is insignificant, it would probably be better that their owners should be driven to alter them than that they should be allowed to stand in the way of settling this difficult question, in a manner acceptable to the bulk of the mercantile community.

From Chamber to the Government of India.

Calcutta, 17th February, 1881.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to aknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 129 of the 3rd instant relative to the Bill to provide for the registration of trade-marks.

The Committee have noted the objections that have been raised in England and in this country to the various propositions that have been submitted for the solution of the question under reconsideration; and they observe with satisfaction that the Select Committee of the Legislative Council do not now, for the reasons assigned, press the adoption of the course which they recommended, and which would have necessitated the registration in India of all English trade-marks.

The Committee of the Chamber are confident that the simplest and most efficacious solution of the question would result from the registration in England of trade-marks of Indian manufacturers and traders, which would thus be placed on the same footing as English trade-marks, and legislative provision would obviously be of the simplest character, as illustrated in the 7th paragraph of your letter.

With reference to the point of difficulty which might arise in connection with the use and registration of marks fancifully designated, the Committee are under the impression that the number of such marks, if indeed they exist at all, must be altogether insignificant; but they are not in a position to answer your inquiry on this point with sufficient accuracy, and would suggest a reference to the Registrar of Calcutta who must, of course, be in possession of the *fullest* particulars.

PETROLEUM BILL.

The Bill to regulate the importation, conveyance, and storage of petroleum oils in Indian ports has been passed, and the Committee are glad to say that the restrictions sought to be imposed by the Bill as at first published, and which, if retained, would have seriously interfered with the trade, have been expunged. It is hoped that the local Government, the Port Commissioners, and the Police authorities under

whose supervision the trade is placed, will endeavour, in carrying out the law, to hamper as little as possible the operations of importers and dealers. The Committee see the necessity for landing stages or other convenience being put up at the ghauts where only kerosine oils can be landed, and hope this question may be brought before the Port Commissioners at an early date.

THE PORT TRUST.

The following correspondence is the outcome of remarks made by members of the Chamber at the last half-yearly meeting. The Committee feel grateful to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor for his attention to their representations, and they trust that the days of excessive charges in Calcutta have passed.

The Port Commissioners' letter replying to the Committee's arguments having been forwarded for the information of the Chamber, it is published herein; and though not desiring to unnecessarily re-open a controversy which might be regarded as closed by the Lieutenant-Governor's Resolution, the Committee cannot refrain from remarking upon one or two points.

The Committee regret that a wrong impression was created by their omission to notice certain changes in the mode of levying mooring hire introduced by the Commissioners, and upon which they take credit for having reduced charges 7½ lakhs in 8 years. The Committee nevertheless observe that the receipts from moorings are more now than they were before the change, although collected from fewer ships, so that the average charge per vessel would seem to be higher than ever.

The Committee cannot understand the Commissioners' statement (para. 14 of letter No. 3970, 25th March 1881) that the reserve funds belonging to the Port amount to only 5½ lakhs of rupees.

Upon page 43 of the Port Administration Accounts for the year 1879-80, the assets of the Port proper are stated as follows :—

		Rs.
Investment for Reserve	...	3,64,250
Investment for Depreciation	...	1,99,994
Loan to Part 5 (of which Rs. 1,60,000 represents the Investment in Strand Bank Land)		1,81,605
Total Investment	...	7,45,849

The above being exclusive of a Cash Balance of	...	1,38,861
Total of Cash in hand and money invested	Rs.	8,84,710

It appears to the Committee that these figures fully bear out their statement, but if they can be made to bear a different signification, it appears to the Committee highly desirable that the accounts should be recast in a more intelligible form. Indeed, the Committee would take occasion to add, that in many items the accounts as published appear inconsistent and, needlessly confusing.

There are other points upon which the Committee might feel inclined to comment, but seeing that the Lieutenant-Governor has requested the Commissioners to discuss matters with the Committee of the Chamber, the present Committee content themselves with leaving in the Secretary's charge a memorandum for the information of their successors.

Particular reference having been made by the Port Commissioners to a correspondence of theirs with Messrs. Turner, Morrison and Co., the Committee annex copies thereof, together with a letter from the firm in question to the Committee.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 22nd February 1881.

I have the honor to again address you upon the subject of the charges levied upon our trade by the Commissioners for making Improvements in the Port of Calcutta.

Before the passing of the Act appointing the present Port Trust, Sir George Campbell, who was then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, and who had seen the working of the Jetties experimentally built by Government, remarked that " with the short experience already had of the " working of the Jetties, his own opinion was, that one of " the earliest acts of the Commissioners would be " to reduce the charges, without any risk whatever of " not having an income fully sufficient to meet all expen- " diture."

In the first Administration Report published by the Port Commissioners, they also express the hope that " they may be in a position to recommend a reduction " in the present scale of charges in the course of next " year."

The Chamber of Commerce, relying upon these statements, have looked for some relief from the heavy charges which were at first deemed necessary to cover the cost of the improvements which were being carried out, but in 1876 they were disappointed to learn that the Commissioners had deferred the consideration of the question of

any reduction until the completion of certain appliances then stated to be on the point of accomplishment, should justify the question being taken up. It was not however until 1878 that, after an urgent appeal from the Committee of the Chamber, Jetty fees amounting to Rs. 52,000, were somewhat tardily remitted. To the present time no further reductions have been even proposed; indeed, the Commissioners are taxed with having added to the dues upon shipping by increasing the rent of moorings, *viz.*, by charging upon gross, instead of upon net, tonnage, and with having endeavoured to further enhance the Port dues by the levy of five rupees per ship, on the plea that the expenses of the Moyapore Magazine exceeded its revenue.

Upon the subject of the mooring hire, I am directed to submit a statement made by a member of the Chamber at the last half-yearly meeting :— "Those of the Cham- "ber who were consignees of vessels, and particularly of "*sailing* ships, were aware that until 1874 Lloyds and the "other Registers gave but one tonnage for each vessel, "namely, the net or registered tonnage. Up to that date, "accordingly, the Port Commissioners followed the practice "of the Government before them, and charged mooring hire "on the net. Unfortunately for us, in 1874, Lloyds began to "state the gross tonnage of ships as well as the net, and "indeed they also gave the builder's tonnage; and then it "seemed to dawn on the Commissioners that there was an "opportunity for raising their fees. Accordingly, without "notice, and without any sort of sanction, the Commission- "ers commenced to charge mooring hire according to the "gross."

The Committee are informed that the schedule author-

ising the levy of mooring hire does not define the meaning of the term " per ton." upon which the charge is to be made ; but it appears that there is no real need for any definition, for the official meaning of the term is most clearly laid down in the Merchant Shipping Act of 1854, where, in section 26, after several sections describing the method by which ships are to be measured, and showing what deductions are to be made from the gross tonnage of a vessel in order to ascertain her tonnage, the words of the law are—"Whenever the tonnage of any " ship has been ascertained and registered in accordance " with the provisions of this Act, the same shall thenceforth " be deemed to be the tonnage of such ship."

That the Commissioners are well aware of the fact that a vessel's tonnage is by law her net tonnage is, the Committee consider, shown by the action of the Commissioners in collecting the Port dues for Government upon the net tonnage of the very vessels which they assess for mooring hire upon their gross.

During the ten years of the administration by the Commissioners, the trade of the Port has succeeded in obtaining a reduction in charges estimated at Rs. 52,000, but this actually in no measure reduced the earnings of the Commissioners ; whereas a sum of nearly thirty-five lakhs of rupees has been spent out of revenue upon works of improvement and permanent construction, and this large sum has been drawn from those trading here, in addition to the amounts required for management, interest, repairs, sinking fund, insurance and reserve fund. The Administration Report last published shows that the Commissioners had a surplus on the year's working of about five lakhs of ru-

pees, after providing for all possible charges, and that nearly the whole of this sum has been applied in further additions to Block, while nothing has been set apart for the long-promised reduction in charges.

The Committee are aware of, and in a measure agree with, the Lieutenant-Governor's opinion that there may be works of general utility but not immediately remunerative, which exceptionally it is justifiable to pay for out of Revenue. The Committee think, however, that as regards this Port, we have passed the period during which such departure from sound principles may have been necessary; and they would venture to urge upon His Honor's attention the admirable rules for apportionment of expenditure between Capital and Revenue which the Secretary of State for India has laid down for the government of the East India Railway Company.

They are as follows :—

"The question whether any expenditure incurred for "the purposes of the undertaking is to be treated in the "whole or in part as a charge incurred on Capital Ac- "count, or how the same is to be dealt with, shall be de- "termined on the general principle, that Capital is to bear "the cost of new works, of additional rolling stock, plant, "and machinery, and of substantial improvements of and "additions to old works, rolling stock, plant, and machi- "nery, including the cost of any temporary new work, "the construction of which is requisite for the construc- "tion of a work properly chargeable to Capital, and that "the cost of repairs, restorations, renewals, replacements, "or substitutions is to be borne by Revenue. Provided ne- "vertheless that any item of expenditure properly charge-

" able to Capital in accordance with this principle, but not " exceeding 2,000 Rupees, may, at the discretion of the " Secretary of State, be charged to Revenue, but so that " the aggregate expenditure charged to Revenue on account " of such items shall not exceed 25,000 Rupees in any half-" year ; &c."

In the present position of the Port, the Committee would much regret to see further works undertaken except those for which there is an unmistakeable public demand, and which therefore are likely to be immediately remunerative. For these latter works the needful funds can be readily obtained on loan. The Lieutenant-Governor's Resolution on the Commissioners' last report justly declares the Trust to be in a satisfactory financial condition, and gives expression to the hope that the ample security afforded by their property and income, and provided for by a recent Act, will place the Commissioners in a position of credit as borrowers in the open market.

The Committee go further, and would express the hope that all proposals for further improvements and additions to Port appliances, however financed, will be most rigidly scrutinised. Without in any way wishing to detract from the credit due to the Port Commissioners and to their energetic and capable Executive for their management hitherto, the Committee would venture to point out that the possession and all but irresponsible control of such large sums of money as the surpluses now exhibit, are apt to engender extravagance and to encourage the formation of projects, which, though possibly improvements, are not really or not pressingly needed for the proper and economical carrying on of the trade of the Port. It is

probable that had the charges been originally upon a scale which left only a narrow margin of profit, after providing costs of management, less money would have been expended upon the works now in existence. In illustration of their meaning the Committee need only point to the Commissioners' new Offices, and inquire to what degree the trade of the port is benefited by the illuminated clock erected thereon, even if the building itself, with its spacious offices and luxurious lift, was so urgently called for as to justify a postponement of a reduction of the burdens on trade.

Clock	...Rs.	3,500
Time Ball	... „	3,800
Lift	... „	4,900
Furniture	... „	26,803
Office and Land for Office	... „	2,87,566
	Rs.	3,26,569

Again, it is publicly reported that the building of Bonded and Tea Warehouses is in contemplation. Such undertakings will interfere very seriously with the vested interests of those who have hitherto provided the respective warehouses; and, though the Committee recognise that there may be much to be said in favour of such facilities on the river bank, yet they think that, before the Commissioners become committed to the large expenditure which will be required, it would be advisable to test, more thoroughly than seems yet to have been done, the views of those engaged in the various trades concerned, and to ascertain whether, in spite of existing warehouses, there is a general and pressing demand for additional accommodation. If there be such a want generally felt, it should follow that the proposed warehouses will be immediately remunerative, and, if so, they should clearly not be built out of revenue.

The Committee consider the present moment one in which they cannot too strongly urge upon his Honor's attention the desirableness of reducing, in every possible way, the charges upon the trade of Calcutta. The comparative cheapness of Chittagong has already resulted in a diversion of a portion of our Jute trade; this, and the opening and extension of Railways in Western and Northern India point to early interference with the monopoly which Calcutta has hitherto enjoyed of the produce of the large districts intersected by the rivers running into the Ganges and Bramahputra, and of the trade in imports, more especially piece-goods, to the North-West; whilst the competition of the ports of Burmah for our rice trade grows yearly more formidable. The course of events at Liverpool shows that the building of docks and extensive facilities for trade do not always attract business. There, in spite of increased appliances, trade has of late been actually diverted from the port, as it could not afford to pay the heavy charges necessitated by the large sums which have been spent upon improvements; and recent papers from Home advise, that the Liverpool Dock Board have found it necessary to reduce dues to the extent of no less than £111,960 per annum in order to endeavour to satisfy the demands of those using the port. Calcutta is known to be the most expensive port of India. Hitherto, this has not been a matter of very critical importance, for our river systems and railways have so cheapened the cost of inland transit as to compensate for the heavier charges at the port. But, as has already been remarked, this comparatively cheaper inland transit is endangered by the opening of the Railways from Bombay, a port which is favoured by being upon the sea-board, and therefore saved

heavy pilotage and towage charges, and also by being far nearer to those European markets which absorb the bulk of our export trade. This last admits of considerably cheaper rates for the sea carriage of produce, owing to a smaller consumption of coal and economy of time by the steamers trading there.

Touching the charges which, in the Committee's opinion, may fairly be reduced, I am directed to submit the following remarks, taking the several Departments in the order in which they appear in the Administration Report:—

1. *Jetties.*—The account upon page 48, showing the receipts and expenditure during the year ending 31st March 1880, makes the receipts from actual charges (excluding income from investments) ... Rs. 6,63,808 12 11

The expenditure necessary for management, interest and sinking funds, taxes, repairs, and working expenses, is stated in the same account to be ,, 5,06,164 15 4

Leaving a surplus of revenue, after providing for all working charges, of ... ... ,, 1,57,364 13 7

The whole of this large amount the Commissioners appear to have spent in new rolling stock and extensions, in addition to nearly Rs. 30,000 for repairs of existing plant. Without wishing to be hypercritical, the Committee submit that at any rate the charge of Rs. 1,36,000

debited for extension of shed accommodation, &c., should have been provided out of Capital.

The invested insurance and reserve funds on 31st March 1880 stood at Rs. 1,03,587-5-9, and may be added to by passing into them the income from investments, which now amounts to Rs. 5,846 annually. Even should His Honor deem this provision insufficient, the Committee trust that he may nevertheless consider that a considerable reduction in the Jetty charges on merchandise and on vessels is practicable out of the large surplus above shown.

2. *Inland Vessels Wharves.*—The account upon page 49 gives the receipts, excluding, as before, proportion of rent,

as	Rs.	4,79,943 9 0
The expenditure, excluding the one item under the head of new works and improvements, (say Rs. 1,23,541-14-4,) but including all other charges and interest and sinking fund, is...	„	3,60,109 8 2
Leaving a surplus of... ...	Rs.	1,19,834 0 10

Turning to the estimates giving some particulars of the appropriation of the sum of Rs. 1,23,531-14-4 above alluded to, the Committee would again express the view, that much here debited to revenue is properly a charge on capital, and that the large surplus above shown consequently justified a reduction in charges upon the trade passing over these wharves.

3. *Strand Bank Lands*—Calculated in the same manner as the preceding statements, the revenue under this head is ... ... Rs. 1,52,089 1 9

While the expenditure, excluding new works (Rs. 42,217-15-11,) but including repairs, is ... „ 86,590 12 6

Leaving a surplus of ... Rs. 65,498 5 3

Touching the expenditure upon new works, the Committee observe that nearly the whole is for the cost of a third warehouse. It seems to them that as such a building directly increases the value of the Port property, and as it should be immediately remunerative, the revenue from the strand banks should not be burdened with the cost of its construction.

The Committee do not however propose to ask for any reductions under this head. They assume that the revenues raised from these lands are such as would be obtained by any private owner, and, so long as the full market rents are obtained, the Committee consider the Port fully justified in securing the profits arising from the possession of such property. But they submit that these accumulating profits, and to some extent the value of the property itself, should be looked upon in the light of a general reserve and insurance to cover the whole of the Port Trust, and so release the separate funds of the various Parts from the necessity of further contributions out of revenue for insurance purposes.

The Committee would be glad to see a detailed statement of sums paid for land, of sums obtained by sale of surplus lands, and of the present value of all lands now

in the possession of the Commissioners, whether acquired by purchase or held in trust under the agreement by which Government have reserved the right of resumption without payment, together with the value of buildings and other property belonging to the Port Trust. No such account appears in the Administration Report for the past year.

4. *Port Proper.*—The revenues, excluding interest on investments, rent of head office, and proceeds of the *Coleroon*, are ... ... Rs. 5,32,745 9 11

While the expenditure under the headings of management, interest and sinking funds, taxes, police, renewals of block, repairs of boats and vessels, working expenses, salaries, pensions and Fort-point works, is ... ... „ 394,478 7 5

Leaving a surplus of ... ... Rs. 1,38,267 2 6

This does not take into consideration a sum of Rs. 90,027-13-11 charged by the Commissioners against revenue for cost of new works and improvements. The estimate for these works shows that they are permanent additions to the Block of the Port, and being so, the Committee think their cost should not be charged to the revenue of a single year, even if any special considerations justify their being charged to revenue at all.

However this may be, the Committee *trust that* His Honor will see his way to *insist upon a reduction* in the

charges upon shipping which have permitted a surplus revenue in a single year of Rs. 1,38,267. The Committee do not see how any difficulty can be found in reducing the charges in this department of the Trust. When the Port was made over to the Commissioners, they undertook to accumulate a reserve fund of 3½ lakhs of rupees to meet losses from cyclones, &c., and the statement of account upon page 43 goes to show that, not only has this sum been already accumulated, but that a further large amount stands to the credit of Depreciation. Indeed, as the Committee read the accounts, they understand that the Commissioners now hold, under various titles, reserve funds amounting to no less than 7½ lakhs of Rupees, being over 43 per cent. on the value of the Block. As these sums must be considered ample security against any probable contingencies, the Committee think that the appropriations from revenue, which permitted the accumulation of such large amounts in so few years, having now ceased, the annual surpluses should be applied to reductions in charges.

5. *New Works.*—The Committee do not consider it necessary at present to enter into any detailed examination of accounts under this head; but they would desire to draw His Honor's attention to the mode in which the Commissioners have provided the funds required for the retaining wall and road along Schalch's wharf. According to the original sanction of Government, it would appear that Rs. 1,60,000 was to be raised by the sale of surplus land, but as the price offered for this land did not come up to the Commissioners' views of its value, they took Rs. 1,60,000 out of the surplus revenue of the Port Proper, and deferred the sale of the land for three

years. The Committee desire me to represent that this was neither more nor less than a land speculation, and they would urge that such speculations are outside of the proper functions of the Commissioners. Should the speculation thus entered into prove unfortunate, there will be no justification for the loss incurred: should it succeed, the benefit will not accrue to those who have a right to it, namely, the present Traders, whose contributions enabled the Commissioners to embark in the speculation.

General Summary.—The Committee think they have shown that if the principle of applying current revenue to the construction of new works were condemned, the trade of Bengal might at once be encouraged by the remission of 4 lakhs of rupees of unnecessary annual taxation. That this might be done without danger to the Port will probably be admitted, when it is considered how enormous a reserve, under various names, has already been accumulated. Thus—there are the cash balances on 31st March 1880, not previously noticed in this letter, but aggregating Rs. 4,42,302-4-2. Then there are the investments for the Reserve, Insurance, and Depreciation Funds together amounting to Rs. 6,67,832-4-1, exclusive of Rs. 160,000 above noticed as invested in land. There are the annual profits from the Strand Estate which, invested, would speedily reach a big total. And, lastly, there is the hitherto unstated, but unquestionably large and yearly growing, value of the Port lands themselves, and the 35 lakhs worth of buildings and plant erected on a portion of them and in the Port. And beyond all these solid reserves in money and land, there is the strong pro-

bability that lightening the burdens on commerce would reveal its elasticity, and that so a reduction of fees might not prove the least remunerative of the Commissioners' proceedings.

The Committee trust His Honor will cause a close examination to be made into the whole subject, and they earnestly hope that it may lead him to accord some relief to the commerce of this Port before the course of events elsewhere shall have caused a diversion of a serious proportion of our business. Experience has shown that once diverted, it is most difficult to bring back the flow of trade into its former channels.

From the Government of Bengal to the Chamber.

Calcutta, the 1st April 1881.

With reference to your letter of the 22nd February last, regarding the charges levied upon trade by the Port Commissioners, I am directed to forward, for the information of the Chamber, a copy of a letter No. 3,970, dated the 25th March, containing the remarks of the Port Commissioners in reply to your representation, and a copy of the Lieutenant-Governor's orders upon the Commissioners' estimates for the year 1881-82.

From W. DUFF BRUCE, Esq., *Vice-Chairman to the Port Commissioners, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department.—No.* 3970. *Dated the 25th March* 1881.

In compliance with the request made in the Secretariat endorsement No. 19, dated 3rd March 1881, forwarding,

for any remarks the Commissioners may have to make, a letter from the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, dated 22nd February 1881, the Commissioners desire to offer the following remarks upon the most important statements contained in the letter. These remarks however, it appears to the Commissioners, might perhaps have been unnecessary, as their proceedings have always been conducted under the approval and careful supervision and control of the Government of Bengal. The Commissioners therefore do not propose to occupy the time of Government needlessly with a detailed reply to all the objections raised by the Committee of the Chamber, but they believe that the following comments on the leading and most important points will enable the Government to come to a satisfactory conclusion on the merits of the case. The Commissioners have to notice a slight inaccuracy in paragraph 2 of the Committee's letter, in which certain remarks are attributed to Sir George Campbell as Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. A reference to page 226 of the supplement to the *Calcutta Gazette* of 6th April 1870 will show that the remarks cited by the Committee were made by the late Sir William Grey as Lieutenant-Governor.

2. With reference to the statement that with the exception of a reduction in jetty charges amounting to Rs. 52,000, made in 1878, the Commissioners have made no reductions whatever, the following extract from the second annual report for 1872-73 submitted to Government under cover of letter No. 3325, dated the 18th July 1873, will show that the Commissioners promptly acted up to the hope expressed in the first annual report :—

51. The Commissioners having thus provided the reserve fund to meet the cost of repairing damages which the boats, moorings, &c., may at any time sustain in consequence of a cyclone, and having also provided a depreciation fund, by which a certain fixed amount will be annually set aside to meet the cost of renewing boats, &c., unfitted by ordinary wear and tear for further work, took into consideration the propriety of making a reduction in port charges; and a Committee was appointed to inquire into and report upon the feasibility of such a reduction, with a view to the preparation of the estimates for 1873-74 upon the basis of reduced rates. The Committee reported that with the actual returns of income and expenditure for 1871-72, and the probable returns of the year 1872-73 before them, they were of opinion a surplus of about Rs. 95,872 would probably be the result of maintaining the port charges then in force, and they recommended that of this amount a sum of Rs. 80,000 should be applied to a reduction of port charges.

52. It was further reported that the charge which pressed most heavily on vessels trading to the port, and which was most unequal in its incidence, was mooring hire. For five months, from June to October, it was double the rate payable from November to May, and it was therefore recommended that the charges should be equal all the year round, and should be throughout at the lower rates. The maximum rate of charge was formerly fixed for vessels of 2,000 tons and upwards; and considering that the tonnage of many vessels trading to the port ranges above 2,000 tons, up to and even over 3,000 tons, a scale of rates progressing proportionately to the higher tonnage was proposed. In addition to this reduction in mooring hire, the Sub-Committee, in reporting on the question, recommended that vessels moved to and from the jetties for the convenience of the Commissioners should be exempted from Harbour Masters' charges. The report was adopted by the Commissioners and submitted for the consideration and orders of Government, and His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, with the consent of the Governor-General in Council, has been pleased to notify that the reduced schedule of port charges shall have effect from April 1st, 1873.

3. The reduction in mooring hire, which was estimated to diminish the income from this source by Rs. 80,000 annually, has reduced port charges by the following amounts :—

	Rs.
In 1873-74	81,466
„ 1874-75	77,372
„ 1875-76	80,000
„ 1876-77	85,169
„ 1877-78	1,07,757
„ 1878-79	1,20,717
„ 1879-80	1,14,232
„ 1880-81 (estimate)	86,500
Total ...	*7,53,213*

4. This important reduction seems unfortunately to have escaped the notice of the Committee of the Chamber.

5. The member of the Chamber who made the statement referred to in paragraph 5 of the letter, regarding an alleged change in the practice of charging mooring hire, was Mr. Morrison, of the firm of Messrs. Turner, Morrison & Co., with which firm the Commissioners have had a lengthy correspondence upon this subject during the past year. This will be found printed at page 388 of the Port Commssioners' proceedings at a meeting held on the 1st October 1880. The Commissioners were

accused of having deviated from the previous practice of Government and charged mooring hire on the gross instead of the net tonnage. It was pointed out to Messrs. Turner, Morrison, that whenever a vessel had a gross and a net tonnage, the invariable practice had been to charge on the gross. The net tonnage, it must be explained, is the tonnage after deducting the space occupied by the engines and boilers and by the crew. It was only about 1873 that sailing vessels began to have the crew space exempted from their gross tonnage. Steamers always showed these deductions, and hence had a gross and a net registered tonnage, paying mooring hire on the former. When in 1873 sailing vessels had their crew space exempted, they also obtained a gross and a net tonnage, and were charged mooring hire on gross tonnage as the steamers were. No alteration was made in the practice of charging; the old practice was followed, and the schedule was fixed so as to secure a certain amount of income calculated on gross tonnage. The extract from the annual report of 1872-73 above quoted proves this, as the Commissioners, when referring to the growing tonnage of vessels, state that they had to provide for vessels over 3,000 tons, and no vessels certainly were contemplated as over 3,000 tons *net* register. If, as Messrs. Turner, Morrison state in their letter of the 14th July 1880, their contention was only in regard to sailing vessels, it is to be observed that, as the schedule fixes a scale,* increasing with the ship's tonnage by 250 tons each item, it is only in a very few cases that the omission of the crew space takes the vessel out of one class into another, or that there is any difference between the charge if made on gross or net tonnage.

Schedule of Charges for Mooring Hire.

					Rs.	A.	P.
* All vessels up to	199 tons		per day ...	...	1	8	0
„ * from	200 to	299 tons	„ ...	...	2	0	0
„ „	300 „	399 „	„ ...	...	2	8	0
„ „	400 „	499 „	„ ...	...	3	0	0
„ „	500 „	599 „	„ ...	...	3	8	0
„ „	600 „	999 „	„ ...	...	4	0	0
„ „	1,000 „	1,249 „	„ ...	...	5	0	0
„ „	1,250 „	1,499 „	„ ...	...	6	0	0
„ „	1,500 „	1,749 „	„ ...	...	7	0	0
„ „	1,750 „	1,999 „	„ ...	...	8	0	0
„ „	2,000 „	2,249 „	„ ...	...	9	0	0
„ „	2,250 „	2,499 „	„ ...	...	10	0	0
„ „	2,500 „	2,749 „	„ ...	...	11	0	0
„ „	2,750 „	2,999 „	„ ...	...	12	0	0
„ „	3,000 and upwards		„ ...	...	15	0	0

6. The following gross and net tonnage of some of the largest sailing vessels now in port is given for comparison :—

	Registered Tonnage.	
	gross.	*net.*
"Great Victoria"	2,386	2,278
"Belfast"	1,957	1,865
"Dundrennan"	1,950	1,891
"Dunskeig".	1,863	1,768
"Falls of Bruar"	1,808	1,740
"Duchess of Argyle"	1,766	1,699
"Star of France"	1,644	1,569

7. The Commissioners cannot admit the force of the comparison which has been instituted in paragraphs 9 and 10 between the government of the East Indian Railway and the management of the port. The circumstances of the two cases are entirely different.

8. In paragraph 11 the Committee state that they would "régret to see further works undertaken except

those for which there is an unmistakable public demand," and in paragraph 12 a hope is expressed that "all proposals for future works will be most rigidly scrutinized." The Commissioners have undertaken no works which did not appear to them calculated to facilitate the trade of the port, and no proposals for works of port improvement have ever been passed by the Commissioners without careful and rigid scrutiny, and the sanction and cognizance of Government. In most of the cases in which works have been constructed from Revenue, the Commissioners have been satisfied that they were works which would yield no direct return. They have provided improved accommodation where inferior accommodation existed, and the Commissioners considered that such works should not be carried out from borrowed money. A new bonded or tea warehouse is a work which would yield a direct return, and if, in order to satisfy the requirements of the port, they are eventually carried out, it will be necessary to borrow new capital for the purpose.

9. With regard to the general principle enunciated in paragraphs 8 to 12 of the letter, the Commissioners desire to recite the orders passed by the Lieutenant-Governor in letter No. 3014, dated 24th October 1877, to the Chamber of Commerce. That letter was an answer to a representation made by the Chamber as to the policy of the Port Commissioners in carrying out new works from Revenue. It was stated, in reply to this representation, that

> "While His Honor fully recognizes the necessity of maintaining a due distinction between those works which may properly

be charged to Revenue, and those of which the cost should be debited to Capital account, he is inclined to think that the alleged variance of opinion between the Port Commissioners and the Committee of the Chamber does not so much affect the principles upon which this distinction should be maintained as the application of these principles to particular items charged in the accounts. Mr. Eden agrees with the Chamber in thinking that a plea founded on the rates in force in London or Liverpool would not afford any justification of the maintenance of a needlessly high scale of charges in Calcutta; but the question whether the charges are needlessly high is the very point in issue, and it is not disposed of merely by showing that some part of the cost of permanent works of construction has been defrayed from Revenue. It must be remembered that much of the work of improvement of the port, which it is the duty of the Commissioners to carry out, is of a kind which cannot be directly remunerative; and the Lieutenant-Governor thinks that it would be undesirable on the one hand, to fetter the action of the Commissioners in executing works of general utility to the trade of the port, though such works may not bring in an immediate money return; and, on the other hand, it appears reasonable that such works should be paid for from Revenue and not from Capital."

10. The Committee point out in paragraph 14 that other ports are now beginning to compete with Calcutta, and that everything that can be done should be done in the way of reducing charges, and they allege that the effect of incurring a large debt to provide improved appliances in the port of Liverpool has been to divert trade from that port. In reply to these statements I am to remark that if the Commissioners had acted upon the advice of the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, and constructed all works, whether directly remunerative or, not with borrowed money, Calcutta might

now be in the same difficulty as Liverpool, and the Commissioners precluded from making any reductions at all. The Commissioners have for years past anticipated that the opening of the Rajputana Railway would bring Bombay into more direct competition with Calcutta. These anticipations are being realized, and the policy on which the Commissioners have acted during the last ten years now places the Trust in a position to give the advantages to the trade of the port by the reduction of port dues and pilotage, which are recommended in the Budget Estimates for the coming year, so as to put Calcutta in a more favorable position as compared with Bombay than it has hitherto been. It has never yet been shown that the jetty or inland wharf charges pressed too heavily on any branch of trade, and the fact that permanent works have been constructed out of Revenue does not show that rates have been excessive, or that the works have yielded a larger profit than they should have been made to do. That at the rates charged the works have yielded a profit is due chiefly to the fact, that a great part of the foreshore was given over without cost to the Commissioners, and that they have been able to reclaim a large piece of ground on a valuable site, and to let it out at high rates.

11. With reference to the abstract of Strand Bank lands revenue account, given in clause (3), paragraph 20 of the Chamber's letter, it is to be observed that it is upon the security of the surplus rents from the Strand Bank lands that the Commissioners were enabled, without fear of loss, to borrow the large sums required for the purchase of the foreshore land between Aheereetolah and

Cossipore. Now that the land acquired and the works constructed have proved remunerative, the surplus revenue of the Strand Bank lands is the security upon which the Commissioners expect to raise the money required to carry out further works of improvement on the Howrah foreshore.

12. In compliance with the desire expressed by the Committee of the Chamber in paragraph 23, to see a statement of sums paid for lands, of sums obtained by sale of surplus lands, and of the present value of all lands now belonging to the Trust, I am to report that for the purpose of extending the riverside road from Aheereetolah Ghât to the northern boundary of the port, the Commissioners acquired about 100 bighas of land at a cost of Rs. 20,81,380. The surplus land subsequently disposed of by public auction measured $5\frac{1}{2}$ bigahs, and the sale proceeds amounted to Rs. 4,08,872. The Commissioners are not prepared to assign any fixed valuation to the lands and property now in their possession.

13. The Committee in paragraph 25 also take exception to a sum of Rs. 90,027-13-11 charged against Port Revenue, on account of new works and improvements, on the ground that such works were additions to the block of the port. In answer to this the Commissioners have to remark that the larger portion of this expenditure (Rs. 54,000) was spent in providiug accommodation for the port police, in lieu of the floating barracks, which were worn out and condemned. It was therefore replacing block, not adding to it. The balance of the expenditure referred to in this paragraph was incurred in providing landing stages and latrines at a cost of Rs. 33,000. The construction of the

landing stages was undertaken at the special written request of the principal representatives of the mercantile community. The landing stages are for the convenience of masters and crews of vessels and others having business with the shipping; but while adding to the convenience of the trade they have added nothing to the income of the Trust, and are therefore properly charged to Revenue.

14. The Reserve Funds belonging to the port amount to only 5½ lakhs of rupees, against a capital debt of Rs. 17,65,000, not 7½ lakhs as stated in paragraph 26 of the letter. The Committee have apparently included the Jetty Reserve Funds. The following is a correct statement of all Reserve Funds now held by the Trust, against an outstanding debt of Rs. 70,18,564:—

	Rs.	Rs.
Port Reserve Fund	3,50,000	
„ Depreciation Fund	1,98,200	
		5,48,200
Jetty „ „	80,600	
„ Insurance	41,700	
		1,22,300
Total ...		6,70,500

15. Special attention is drawn in paragraph 27 of the Committee's letter to an appropriation of Rs. 1,60,000 from port revenue to a work which, in the first instance, it was decided to carry out from the sale proceeds of surplus lands, and in regard to this the Commissioners have to offer the following explanation. The land taken up for the new river side road at Bagh Bazar was acquired at an average cost of Rs. 2,500 per cottah, and for the surplus lands last put up for sale, only an offer of Rs. 1,500 per cottah was made. The Commissioners

resolved not to sell the land at this sacrifice, and, therefore, deferred the sale. In the meantime the port revenue had been abnormally increased by the unusual number of vessels entering the port in 1876-77-78, on account of the Madras famine, and a large balance was standing unemployed at the Bank of Bengal to credit of this part of the account. The Commissioners, therefore, recommended that this money should be employed, and the land retained until a purchaser could be found willing to give the proper value of the land. To this Government assented, and the Commissioners then passed an order that the land should not be sold for three years, or until the East Indian Railway is brought to the Calcutta side of the river.

16. In conclusion, the Commissioners would request that the remarks now submitted may be taken into consideration by Government in connection with the report of the Budget Committee, copy of which was forwarded to Government under cover of this office letter, No, 3800, dated 14th March 1881.

From A. MACKENZIE, ESQ., *Secretary to the Government of Bengal, to the* VICE-CHAIRMAN *of the Port Commissioners,—Calcutta, April 1st*, 1881.

SIR,—In accordance with the provisions of Section 50, Bengal Act V of 1870, I am directed to return the Port Commissioners' estimates of the receipts and expenditure for the year 1881-82 (received with your covering letter No. 3800 of the 12th instant), and to communicate the following remarks of the Lieutenant-Governor regarding

them. In connection with the estimates, the Lieutenant-Governor has taken into consideration, not merely the papers forwarded with your letter just quoted, but also the representations made by the Chamber of Commerce in their letter of the 22nd February, and the rejoinder of the Commissioners thereto, embodied in your letter No. 3970 of the 25th instant.

2. It appears that the receipts and expenditure in the different departments into which the Port Commissioners divide their operations are estimated thus for the years 1880-81 and 1881-82 (excluding for the present all expenditure on new works, and certain proposed contributions to port dues from the estimates of the latter year, and assuming that no change is made in the rates of charge for jetty, wharf, and port dues) :—

Receipts.	1880-81.	1881-82.
Jetties	7,23,893	7,28,600
Inland Wharves ...	3,90,221	3,84,564
Strand Bank Lands ...	1,55,473	1,56,913
Port	4,77,557	4,76,916
Tramway	1,44,000	1,15,332
Total ...	18,91,144	18,62,325
Expenditure.		
Jetties	7,46,971	5,67,682
Inland Wharves ...	3,80,574	2,31,204
Strand Bank Lands ...	1,72,540	1,47,994
Port	5,36,875	4,32,207
Tramway	1,37,084	1,00,222
Total ...	19,74,044	14,79,309

3. The income of 1881-82 under every heading is thus in excess of expenditure, and the comparison with the revenues of 1880-81 shows that it is moderately estimated. On the other hand the effect of excluding expenditure on new works from the estimates, is to reduce the outlay of 1881-82 below that of 1880-81 by Rs. 4,94,735, and to give a surplus of income over expenditure on the coming year's estimates of Rs. 3,83,016.

4. The revenue and expenditure, as estimated by the Commissioners, are however very differently stated, thus—

	1881-82.	
	Receipts.	Expenditure.
	Rs.	Rs.
Jetties	6,88,600	6,87,682
Inland Wharves ...	3,84,564	3,61,204
Strand Bank ...	1,56,913	1,77,994
Port	4,76,916	5,12,207
Tramway	1,15,332	1,09,390
Total ...	18,22,325	18,48,477

The result being an excess of expenditure over income of Rs. 26,152.

5. Under the head of *Jetties*, the Commissioners give up Rs. 40,000 of their present income by reducing jetty dues to that amount. They provide Rs. 60,000 for removing Import Sheds Nos. 2 and 3, and re-erecting them on the embankment, and Rs. 60,000 as a contribution to Port Dues. Under *Inland Wharves*, they provide Rs. 40,000 for a new shed and frontage at Armenian Ghât, Rs. 30,000 for a Burning Ghât and Refuge for Moribunds at Casi

Mitter's Ghat; and Rs. 60,000 as a contribution to Port Dues. Under *Strand Bank*, Rs. 30,000 are provided for unspecified "new works." Under *Port*, Rs. 60,000 are set down for new moorings, and Rs. 20,000 for a Harbour-Master's house at Garden Reach. Under *Tramway*, Rs. 9,168 are provided for works and huts of gatemen. These are the items in the estimates which the Lieutenant-Governor has felt bound specially to scrutinise, with reference not only to the objections taken by the Chamber of Commerce to the appropriation of revenue to permanent works, but to the whole circumstances of the port and the condition of its trade.

6. The other parts of the estimates call for no remark. They are approved by the Lieutenant-Governor, who sanctions the revised schedule of establishments appended to the estimates under Section 18 of the Act. The schedule of Tramway establishments may be modified during the year as the Commissioners think desirable, provided the total sanctioned charge is not exceeded, and provided the modifications of the schedule are submitted from time to time for formal sanction as the law requires.

7. Turning now to the general question of Works and Port and Landing charges, I am to say that hitherto the Government has refrained from interfering with the annual provision of a substantial surplus revenue, and the free expenditure of such revenue upon permanent improvements, because it considered it to be for the general benefit of the Port and Town that the facilities required by the Import and Export trade of Bengal should be provided as quickly as possible, and because it believed that the interests of that trade would be better served by pushing on

the work of improvement while Calcutta had a virtual monopoly of the Upper Indian market, than by burdening the future of the port with the maximum amount of capital debt. Circumstances have now, however, changed, or appear to be on the verge of change. The completion of the Rajputana Railway and the extensions of the western system of Railway communication, generally, are rapidly turning the scale in favour of Bombay. Trade, moreover, is not so flourishing as it has been, and feels more seriously burdens that in past years were lightly thought of. It is imperatively necessary to the inland trade of Bengal that the charges imposed at the port of supply should be reduced to a minimum. At the same time the appliances of the port have already, by the expenditure of past years, been developed so as to meet satisfactorily all the more pressing wants of commerce. What remains to be done can be gone about in a more leisurely way, and future generations may fairly be charged with their full share of the expenditure required to complete and perfect the arrangements.

8. The majority of the Port Commissioners themselves admit that surplus revenue may now properly be applied to the reduction of port charges, though they are not apparently prepared to reduce materially the actual amount of their revenues, and would still pursue the system of appropriating revenue to paying for permanent works of improvement so long as these are not directly remunerative. The Lieutenant-Governor thinks, however, that further steps must be taken in the direction indicated above.

9. Under the head of *Jetties*, the Commissioners have decided to reduce the jetty charges by an aggregate

amount of Rs. 40,000 per annum. They also propose to give Rs. 60,000 of their present surplus revenue under this head, *plus* a similar sum from the surplus revenue from their *Inland Wharves*, or Rs. 1.20,000 in all, as a contribution towards "port dues," to obviate the necessity of raising these from 4 to 6 annas per ton—a measure required to enable Government to make a permanent reduction of 15 per cent. in the pilotage charges, in place of first crediting that amount as pilotage, and then transfering it to port dues, as is now done. The Lieutenant-Governor accepts this proposal, and will instruct the Port Officer to draw up, for the approval of the Government of India, a revised scale of pilotage. Sir Ashley Eden agrees with the majority of the Commissioners that the reduction of port dues is likely in the end to do more good to the trade of the port than the reduction of landing charges, which are, after all, not disproportionate to the service rendered, not excessive as compared with those in other ports, and not so high as those paid in this port under the old arrangement of cargo boats. If the port dues generally are reduced, it seems probable that freight will be more readily attracted to the port, and it is hardly possible that competition can fail to compel the shipowners to, at any rate, share the benefit with the consignees and consumers of goods.

10. But the Lieutenant-Governor is also of opinion that the charge of Rs. 60,000, entered in the estimates for removing and re-erecting sheds 2 and 3, should not be charged to Revenue, but to Capital. Although the operation of moving the sheds may not bring in any direct return, it is certain that it sets free, as urged by the

dissenting member of the Commissioners' Committee, (Mr. Craik) a valuable site on which it is proposed eventually to build warehouses. The work is in any case one of permanent value, and there is no reason now why such works should be paid out of current revenue.

11. For similar reasons the Lieutenant-Governor thinks that the cost of the new shed and making up the frontage at Armenian Ghât, for which Rs. 40,000 is provided in the *Inland Wharves* estimates, should be charged to Capital Account. The Burning Ghât and Refuge for Moribunds at Casi Mitter's Ghât (Rs. 30,000) may, as proposed, be charged to Revenue.

12. In the *Strand Bank* estimates, the nature of the new works is not specified, but the income from these lands is not on the same footing as the income of the Jetties, Wharves, and Port, and the Lieutenant-Governor will not object to its being devoted to works of permanent value. It might perhaps very properly have been devoted to paying part of the cost of the Burning Ghât and Refuge referred to in the preceding paragraph.

13. As regards the *Port* estimates, the Lieutenant-Governor cannot approve of the proposal to charge the cost of the new Moorings (Rs. 60,000) and of the Harbour-Master's house (Rs. 20,000) to Revenue. The port has a considerable Reserve Fund and Depreciation Fund for supplying losses and deterioration of block. It is not correct, therefore, to treat the new moorings as a mere replacement of old ones. They are really additions to block, and cannot fairly be charged to Revenue. The Harbour-Master's house also is a permanent work, necessary for the

proper carrying out of the business of the port, and the whole cost (Rs. 30,000) should be charged to Capital Account. The Rs. 10,000 charged erroneously against Cash Balances on this account should be replaced.

14. The items of new works in the *Tramway* estimates are petty, and may stand.

15. If the estimates are revised with reference to these remarks, there will be, in addition to the sums of Rs. 40.000 by which jetty dues are to be reduced and Rs. 1,20,000 contributed towards port dues, a further surplus available as follows :—

	Rs.
Under Jetties	60,000
Under Inland Wharves	40,000
Under Port	80,000
Total ...	1,80,000

The Port Commissioners should consider how this may best be utilized, whether as a contribution towards reducing port dues still further, or in reducing direct charges under the three headings in question, or in both ways. They will remember that the Port approaches will probably soon be made over to them altogether, and it appears not improbable that, by judicious management of their revenues from Port Approaches, Port Proper, Jetties and Wharves, they may eventually be able to relieve the trade of Calcutta of port dues to a very considerable extent, the receipts from jetties, wharves, and moorings being maintained at rates adequate to cover all charges.

On the other hand, it is quite possible that it may give more direct and effective relief if they reduce the landing and mooring charges, and maintain port dues at a moderate figure. The Commissioners should place themselves in communication with the Chamber of Commerce, and discuss this matter in a liberal spirit, with the single view of advancing the best interests of the trade of Calcutta and Bengal.

From Chamber to the Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 30th March 1881.

In my letter of the 22nd February, I stated that the Port Commissioners, during their ten years' administration of the Port, had made no reductions in charges beyond the Rs. 52,000 in Jetty charges remitted in 1878.

It has been pointed out to the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce that, in making this statement, they have overlooked the fact that in 1872-3 the Commissioners decided to waive the extra fees which up to that time had been charged for the use of moorings during the monsoon months; and the Committee desire me to express their regret that they should have omitted to notice what, taken by itself, and at the time when it was made, was undoubtedly an important concession.

I am however to remark that the effect of this beneficial action of the Commissioners appears to the Committee to have been appreciably counteracted by a simultaneous revision of the schedule of rates for moorings, whereby

vessels of over 2,000 tons, which had all previously paid one rate, became assessed throughout the year in several classes at higher rates than they had hitherto paid. This revision bears heavily on the class of steamers in which the bulk of the foreign trade of Calcutta is now carried.

Tons. 1,750 to 1,999	Tons. 2,000 to 2,249	Tons. 2,250 to 2,499	Tons. 2,500 to 2,749	Tons. 2,750 to 2,999	Tons. 3,000 and upwards.
Rs. 8	Rs. 9	Rs. 10	Rs. 11	Rs. 12	Rs. 15

In these days when the carrying trade of the world is so rapidly passing into the hands of steam-ship owners, it is surely not necessary to say much towards demonstrating the desirableness of attracting steam vessels to this Port. Not only is cheap freight vital to our trade, but the multiplication of steam-ships on our river tends to develop our coal fields and to stimulate numerous other industries; besides adding to the security of our Empire by providing Government with transport for troops and stores, always available at moderate cost. A steamer which at present pays in Calcutta, in respect of the several compulsory charges, about Rs. 1,800, pays in Rangoon only Rs. 950, and in no other Port round the coasts of India more than Rs. 600.

The Committee perceive in these figures yet another argument in support of the representations they have ventured to place before His Honor in favour of the exercise of greater economy and greater consideration for the exigencies of trade on the part of the Port Commissioners; and the Committee earnestly trust that no minor inaccuracies into which they may perchance have fallen, in dealing with a series of exceedingly voluminous and com-

plicated accounts, may be suffered to divert attention from the main issue.

The case of the Committee, stated shortly, is that the Port Commissioners are piling up unnecessary Reserves, and are spending yearly out of Revenue large sums of money on works which either are not urgently required, or which should be provided for by loans—that the Commissioners are therefore needlessly taxing and burdening the commerce of this Port—that meantime the trade of Calcutta is not only threatened, but to some extent has already been diverted: and that the best mode of arresting this adverse trade movement is by making a large and immediate reduction of charges, not grudgingly here and there, but freely wherever reduction is possible; and upon a careful, economical, and unambitious administration of the affairs of the Port and of the river for the future.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.

No. 26, Calcutta, the 8th April 1881.

In acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 30th March 1881, I am directed to refer you to Mr. Mackenzie's letter No. 22 of the 1st April 1881, under cover of which a copy of the Port Commissioners' remarks in reply to your representation, and a copy of the Lieutenant-Governor's orders on the Port Commissioners' estimates for the year 1881-82, were communicated to the Chamber of Commerce.

Calcutta, 18th April 1881.

H. W. I. WOOD, ESQ.,

Secretary, Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

The Port Commissioners, in their rejoinder to your letter, have referred to a certain correspondence with us, and we are induced to lay the papers before you with the following remarks:—

The Commissioners say :—

"It was only about 1873 that sailing ships began to have their crew space exempted from their gross tonnage."

The Act under which ships are measured, and by virtue whereof crew space is excluded from tonnage, is the Merchant Shipping Act of 1854.

The Commissioners say :—

"Whenever (*i.e.* before 1870) "a sailing vessel reported her gross, mooring hire was charged" (*i.e.* by Government), "on the gross," and this is the only sanction which the Commissioners claim for now charging on the gross.

But the Commissioners also say:—

"It was only about 1873 that sailing ships obtained 'a gross.'" Hence they imagine a ship to 'report' that which she will 'obtain' some three years or more hereafter!

The Commissioners say :—

No alteration was made in the practiceof charging; the old practice "was followed."

Again they say :—"Mooring hire has never been charged on net tonnage."

For answer we submit the Commissioners' Bills for mooring hire, &c. as under, *viz* :—

"RoyalAlice" built in 1863	19th July 1873 15th Sep. 1876 29th Dec. 1880	charged Rs. 5 ₹ day *i.e.* on 1,199 tons being her net.							
		,,	,,	6	,,	,,	1,251	,,	,, gross
"Cashmere" built in 1868	12th July 1876 6th Feb. 1880	,,	,,	5	,,	,,	1,245	,,	,, net
		,,	,,	6	,,	,,	1,277	,,	,, gross
"Centurion" built in 1868	14th May 1877 7th June 1880	,,	,,	5	,,	,,	1,193	,,	,, net.
		,,	,,	6	,,	,,	1,253	,,	,, gross.

The Commissioners say :—

"The schedule was fixed so as to secure a certain amount of income calculated on gross tonnage."

What schedule? Not the original schedule, for under it sailing ships were charged on their net. Nor could it well have been the revised schedule of 1872, for, according to the Commissioners, ships only "obtained" a gross in 1873.

The Commissioners say :—

"The moorings have been constructed in accordance "with the gross tonnage of vessels and without reference "to their net registered tonnage."

It is not very clear how moorings, designed just after the cyclone of 1864, were constructed in accordance with either the gross or the net of vessels built, say, in 1880. Nor is it probable that the strain on moorings can be estimated by mere tonnage apart from model, draft, and masting.

Elsewhere the Commissioners shew that even in the largest sailing ships the difference between gross and net

is not 100 tons: so that the nicety of the calculation whereon the moorings were constructed in accordance with the gross, and not with the net, of unbuilt ships is the more admirable.

The Commissioners say:—

"It is only in a very few cases that there is any difference between the charge on sailing ships if made on gross or net tonnage."

If so, the greater the injustice in those few cases, and the less reason for continuing an injustice which has not even the recommendation of being profitable.

It will be observed that our correspondence with the Commissioners was limited to the question of sailing vessels. Our object was to narrow the issues: but we took care to say that we should afterwards be prepared to take up the case of steamers. Their hardship is clearly the greater.

			Gross.		Net.
Thus the, "Kaiser-i-Hind"	daily pays	Rs.	15 (on 4,023)	in lieu of Rs.	11 (on 2,560)
"Duke of Devonshire"	,,	,,	15 (on 3,009)	,, ,,	8 (on 1,960)
"Vega"	,,	,,	15 (on 3,064)	,, ,,	9 (on 1,997)
"City of Khios"	,,	,,	15 (on 3,246)	,, ,,	9 (on 2,125)

and it should not be forgotten that the excess of gross over net, for which steamers are improperly taxed, consists of propelling power available at short notice to relieve the strain on moorings: nor that a steam vessel has, compared with a sailing ship, no masts and yards to hold the wind.

In conclusion, we would express a hope that, when the Port Commissioners come to consult with the Committee of the Chamber in terms of the Lieutenant-Governor's

directions, the Committee will insist that thenceforth all vessels be charged on their legal (that is to say, their registered) tonnage, as settled by repeated Acts of Parliament.

Thus, a just grievance will have been removed, whilst the concession will not appreciably affect the Port receipts which, it has clearly been demonstrated, can well afford much more extensive reductions.

We are, yours very faithfully,

TURNER, MORRISON & CO.

P.S.—It is noticeable that the last edition (1881) of the Mooring Schedule, issued by the Commissioners, has a a foot-note to the effect that "mooring hire is charged on the gross registered tonnage.".

This never appeared before, and the mooring bills sent in by Government used to bear on their face evidence of the intention to charge according to registered tonnage. We enclose one for inspection.

COPIES OF CORRESPONDENCE, RE-MOORING HIRE ON GROSS TONNAGE.

Calcutta, 3rd June 1880.

G. H. SIMMONS, ESQ.,

Secy., Port Trust.

Some of our shipping friends at home have asked us how it is that Port charges are charged on a sailing ship's

net registered tonnage, and mooring hire on the gross registered tonnage. May we ask you to kindly let us know under what rule these dues are levied? We notice Schedule 5, page 220 of the Port Acts does not specify either net or gross tonnage.

An early reply will be considered a favor.

Yours faithfully,
p.pro. TURNER, MORRISON & Co.
(Sd.) C. E. SMYTH.

Calcutta, 8th June 1880.

MESSRS. TURNER, MORRISON & Co.

In reply to your letter of the 3rd instant, I am directed to inform you that the moorings have been constructed for the accommodation of different classes of vessels in accordance with their gross tonnage and without reference to their nett registered tonnage. I am also to state that the rule under which Port dues are calculated on nett tonnage has been in operation for over 20 years, but there is no record available of the reason why this concession was made.

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) G. H. SIMMONS,
Secretary.

Calcutta, 12th June 1880.

G. H. SIMMONS, ESQ.,
Secy., Port Trust.

Yours of the 8th is before us, and we note the contents. No doubt, it must have been understood by those who

laid down the moorings that every vessel, in addition to her net register, would possess a gross tonnage, and we presume, also a builder's tonnage, which is frequently something larger still. We do not however understand in what sense it can be said that the moorings were constructed in accordance with gross tonnage as distinguished from net or builder's.

We observe that Port dues have been charged according to net register for over 20 years: and we presume we may conclude that this rule has been in force for as long as any records exist, and that mooring hire has been charged on the same basis. Under such circumstances we shall be glad if you will explain on what grounds you call charging by net register a concession, and also under what rule or bye-law you now claim to charge by gross register.

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) TURNER, MORRISON & Co.

Calcutta, 21st June 1880.

MESSRS. TURNER, MORRISON & Co.

With reference to your letter of 12th instant, I am directed to point out that mooring hire has never, as you presume, been charged on the same basis as Port dues, and I enclose herewith for your information copy of a Resolution passed by the Commissioners in reply to an application from Messrs. Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co., on the subject.

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) G. H. SIMMONS,
Secretary.

Calcutta, 6th July 1880.

G. H. SIMMONS, ESQ.,

Secretary, Port Commissioners.

We are obliged for your No. 950.

You say that "Mooring hire has never been charged on the same basis as the Port dues."

Will you kindly state whether you mean that it has never been so charged by the Commissioners, or whether you mean your assertion to be absolute, *viz.*, that moorings have never been charged on net tonnage, neither before nor since the Commissioners took over the trust.

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) TURNER, MORRISON & Co.

Calcutta, 9th July 1880.

MESSRS. TURNER, MORRISON & Co.

In reply to your letter of the 6th instant, I am directed to inform you that, so far as the records in this office show, mooring hire has never been charged on net tonnage either before or after the Commissioners took over charge of the Port. It has always been charged on gross tonnage.

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) G. H. SIMMONS,
Secretary.

Calcutta, 9th July 1880.

G. H. SIMMONS, ESQ.,

Secretary, Port Trust.

We have your letter No. 1157, but think you cannot be correctly informed.

We have searched through our files, and we find that up to the date when the Port Trust was created the charge for mooring hire was invariably made on the net or registered tonnage.

The Commissioners, on assuming charge of the Port, continued to assess ships for moorings on the same basis, *viz.*, on the registered tonnage, and they appear to have done so until some time in the year 1876, when suddenly, for the first time, the heading of the Conservator's bills shows two tonnages; the one being the registered tonnage, and the other what is called the gross.

We think you will find this statement accurate, and we have once more the honor to request that you will favor us with a reference to the authority under which the Commissioners claim to charge vessels otherwise than upon their registered tonnage.

Yours faithfully,

(Sd.) TURNER, MORRISON & Co.

Calcutta, 10th July 1880.

MESSRS. TURNER, MORRISON & Co.

With reference to your letter of the 9th instant, I am directed to ask you to be good enough to favor the Com-

missioners with copies of the bills bearing out the statements made in your letter.

Yours faithfully,
Sd. G. H. SIMMONS,
Secretary.

Calcutta, 12th July 1880.

G. H. SIMMONS, ESQ.,
Secretary, Port Trust.

In reply to your No. 1180, we beg to say that down to 1875 we can find no bill which does not bear out our statements. Would you wish us to send you over the whole?

Yours faithfully,
Sd. TURNER, MORRISON & Co.

Calcutta, 12th July 1880.

MESSRS. TURNER, MORRISON & Co.

In reply to your letter of this date, I am directed to inform you that the Commissioners will not trouble you to send the whole of the bills down to 1875, but will feel obliged if you will send the following vouchers—

No. 460, dated 22nd Sept. 1871 against the "Belgian."
„ 639 „ 24th Nov. 1871 „ "Rydal Hall."
„ 876 „ 16th Jany. 1871 „ "Krishna."

Yours faithfully,
Sd. G. H. SIMMONS,
Secretary.

Calcutta, 14th July 1880.

G. H. SIMMONS, ESQ.,

Secretary, Port Trust.

We have your No. 1199 asking for vouchers

No. 460	against the	"Belgian"
„ 639	„	"Rydal Hall"
„ 876	„	"Krishna"

You are very welcome, of course, to these: but we observe that these are steamers, whereas our correspondence so far has had reference to sailing ships. We had not overlooked the question of steam tonnage, and shall be quite prepared to take it up hereafter, but meantime we shall feel obliged if you would have the goodness to favor us with your authority for charging sailing vessels otherwise than per register ton.

Yours faithfully,

(Sd.) TURNER, MORRISON & Co.

Calcutta, 15th July 1880.

MESSRS. TURNER, MORRISON & Co.

In reply to your letter of yesterday's date, I am directed to inform you that, in charging mooring hire on the gross tonnage of vessels, the Commissioners have only followed the practice which obtained previous to their taking over charge of the Port from Government in 1871. The vouchers mentioned in my letter No. 1199, of the 12th instant, refer to steamers as you observe, and they were singled out, as at the time only steamers were recognised as having a gross tonnage and a net tonnage. Between the 1st May 1871

and the 31st March 1872, there were 58 vessels consigned to you, three of these being the steamers named in your letter which gave, on their entering Port, their gross registered tonnage and their net tonnage. The 55 sailing vessels only gave one tonnage, and from an examination of Lloyd's Register of that date, it appears that 51 of these had only the one tonnage noted on their certificates. As soon as a second tonnage came to be given by sailing vessels, both tonnages were recorded, and as with steamers the mooring hire was charged on the registered gross tonnage and Port dues on registered net tonnage.

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) G. H. SIMMONS,
Secretary.

Calcutta, 15th July 1880.

G. H. SIMMONS, ESQ.,
Secretary, Port Trust.

We have your No. 1251 and note that, in charging mooring hire on the gross tonnage of vessels, the Commissioners have only followed the practice which obtained previously to the taking over charge of the Port from Government. Might we ask you to give us some instances to prove the practice which you assert was followed by the Government? Will you give us the names of any sailing vessels on which Government charged moorings on gross tonnage, when such tonnage would have rendered the ships liable for a higher charge than they would have paid if assessed according to the registered tonnage?

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) TURNER, MORRISON & Co.

Calcutta, 17*th July* 1880.

MESSRS. TURNER, MORRISON & Co.

In reply to your letter of 15th instant, I am directed to inform you that the Commissioners will apply to Government for the old records and communicate with you on their receipt.

Yours faithfully,
SD. W. D. BRUCE,
For Secretary.

Calcutta 19*th July* 1880.

TO THE SECRETARY, PORT COMMISSIONERS.

We are in receipt of your No. 1281 of the 17th instant, but would ask if it is necessary to go back to the Government records in order to reply to our enquiry? Your own records during 1870 and 1874 will shew what your practice was during those years, and as the change in charging for moorings appears to have been made at some subsequent date, the authority for the change must be in your own office. We should be much obliged by your giving us the information we have asked for.

We are, Dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,
SD. TURNER, MORRISON & Co.

Calcutta, 26*th July* 1880.

MESSRS. TURNER, MORRISON & Co.

In reply to your letter of the 19th instant, enquiring what the practice was in charging mooring hire from

1870 as shown in the records of this office, I am directed to imform you that the records of this office shew that whenever a sailing vessel reported her gross and her registered net tonnage, mooring hire has been charged on the former.

The only authority which can be traced for this practice is the existence of the practice in regard to vessels giving two tonnages before the Commissioners took charge of the port.

Yours faithfully,

(Sd.) G. H. Simmons,

Secretary.

Calcutta 16*th August* 1880.

G. H. Simmons, Esq.

Secretary,

Port Commissioners.

We regret that press of other work has caused us to defer until now an acknowledgement of your No. 1379, of the 26th ultimo.

We notice that the only warrant you can claim for charging a vessel mooring hire on her gross tonnage is, that before the Commissioners took over the port, it was the practice of Government to levy mooring hire on gross tonnage *whenever* a vessel reported her gross as well as her registered tonnage.

We presume from this statement that you have made that search through the Government records which, in your favor of the 17th ultimo, you were good enough to promise to institute.

Might we therefore beg the favor of being furnished with a list of the vessels on which Government charged

mooring according to the gross, when the register tonnage would have entitled the vessel to a lower rate.

We should be glad if the Commissioners, having ascertained that their recent practice has no sanction beyond what you state the Government did in certain instances which must have been very rare and exceptional, would reconsider the existing mode of charging mooring hire, and issue orders that in future sailing vessels are not to be taxed according to other measurement than the registered tonnage.

We are, Dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) TURNER, MORRISON & Co.

Copy of a Resolution passed by the Commissioners at a meeting held on the 20th day of June 1879.

Read application from Messrs. Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co., agents of the ship "Compta," bringing to the notice of the Commissioners that the mooring hire against the vessel had been charged upon the gross tonnage, and that in consequence of the long detention of the vessel in port, this charge, calculated on gross tonnage, amounted to Rs. 2,143; they therefore request that the hire might be calculated on the net tonnage.

RESOLVED.—That Messrs. Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co. be informed, that it has always been the custom of the Port to charge mooring hire on the gross tonnage, and that the Commissioners could not comply with the request made without surrendering so large a portion of the port income that the receipt could not then cover the expenditure.

PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF A TEA WAREHOUSE BY THE PORT COMMISSIONERS.

The Port Commissioners having invited by circular the views of the Chamber in regard to their proposal to erect a Tea Warehouse, the following was the reply of the Committee :—

From Chamber to Port Commissioners.

Calcutta, 12th May 1881.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have had under consideration your circular letter of the 29th March, but the subject of it being of great importance, involving a question of principle as well as of convenience or necessity, they considered it desirable to obtain the views of members of the Chamber before replying to it, which has necessarily caused some delay.

The Committee find that numerically there is a majority against the proposal of the Port Commissioners to build a Tea warehouse, but taking those firms only who act as Agents for the gardens, opinions seem to be pretty equally divided, whilst, judging the replies by the extent of shipments by each exporter, there is a moderate preponderance in favour of the scheme. The brokers are unanimously adverse.

Opinions being thus divided, the Committee are not prepared to recommend the proposal of the Port Commissioners ; but seeing that it has met with the approval of so many of those interested in the trade, they would be slow to express any decided adverse opinion, and consider that it is deserving of further consideration.

There seems to be little doubt that it would be advantageous to the rapidly increasing trade in Tea if good warehouse accommodation were provided in proximity to the wharves. Loss in weight, from which shippers suffer much, and which is, no doubt, in a measure caused by the handling to which the frail packages are subjected in transit to and from the godowns now in use, would be reduced. Many other advantages might also be secured, such as a more satisfactory basis for terms of sale, now only nominal for cash on delivery, and improved arrangements for sampling and general management (a subject which would require careful consideration,) whilst it would no doubt be possible to arrange for more economical working than at present, and, generally speaking, greater facilities.

The Port Commissioners seem to have under-estimated the crop, which promises this season to fill more nearly 600,000 than 400,000 chests. In the height of the season 100,000 to 120,000 chests may arrive in a single month, and, having regard to the accumulations during the Doorga Poojah holidays, storage for even more than the larger quantity should be provided. Artificially dried rooms for bulking, and space to lay out 20,000 chests should also be supplied, and there should be a spacious covered compound for preparing for shipment, marking and loading the chests.

So large and costly a scheme as here indicated should not be however undertaken, in any circumstance, without the most careful consideration of every detail, and of all the information it is possible to get from those whom it might be expected to benefit.

Having thus referred to the advantages which, under good management, might result from the scheme, the

Committee must also point out that there are many members of the Chamber who object to it on principle.

They base their opinions on the grounds that, a warehouse of this kind is not a property which ought to be built, and in the future managed, by the Port Commissioners; that it is going beyond their province to embark on such an undertaking; and that to do so is to interfere with private enterprise, and to acquire a command over a particular trade, which it is not right that any such body, immediately under the control of Government, should possess. Moreover, they cannot see that there is any guarantee that the warehouse will, at a remunerative rate of charges, attract, unless it be by compulsion, a sufficient portion of the trade to ensure that the undertaking will prove profitable or self-supporting, and that it may not hereafter become more or less of a burthen on the Port.

The Committee would therefore suggest that further action be delayed until the whole question, in all its bearings, has been more fully discussed by all who are interested in the trade.

From Port Commissioners to Chamber.
Circular, dated March 29th, 1881.

With reference to two circulars issued from this office, dated respectively the 14th September 1876 and the 23rd December 1876, I am directed to forward herewith the ground plan of a Tea warehouse which it is proposed to construct on the site of the Armenian Ghat Railway Station, showing the facilities which such a warehouse would afford to the trade.

2. From enquiries made it appears that sufficient room would be required to open out from three to four thou-

sand chests at a time, and for the storage of about 30,000 chests. The space required to lay down, say, 3,500 chests, would be about 16,000 square feet, and for the storage of 30,000 chests, stacking them four chests high, and leaving plenty of room for passages between the different consignments, would be 30,000 square feet. This gives a total of 46,000 square feet.

3. The building it is proposed to construct contains a floor area of 55,000 square feet. In addition to the area available for storage, &c., of tea amounting to 50,000 square feet, it contains an entrance hall and office accommodation consisting of

1 room	... 50×24	... for sales, &c.
2 rooms	... 25×24	... for offices.

4. It is to be constructed nearly in the form of a quadrangle, with a centre court-yard measuring 400 long by 50 at one end and 30 at the other. In this yard boxes can be repaired, marked, &c. The building is designed to be 3 stories high, but at present it is proposed to construct only the first or ground floor. This contains, as already stated, 55,000 square feet, which seems sufficient for the trade that it would be likely to attract at the commencement. The other floors can be added as work increases. When fully completed the warehouse will have a floor area of $55{,}000 \times 3 = 165{,}000$ square feet, or sufficient to store at one time about 120,000 chests. It will probably be sometime before this extent of accommodation is required, but in putting in the foundations for the new building they will be designed to carry a building 3 stories high, so as to utilise to the utmost the valuable site on which it is to be constructed.

5. Objections were raised to the rates proposed in the circular issued in December 1876. The rates have now been reconsidered, and the following is a schedule of the revised rates which the Commissioners now propose to charge.

Teas for direct shipment.

1.	Removal from Steamer or Railway wagons to warehouse or Jetty shed, per chest	0	0	6
2.	Warehouse rent for any period not exceeding 15 days	0	1	0
3.	Over 15 days, but less than a month	0	2	0
4.	For any time exceeding one month per week or part of a week	0	0	6
5.	Removal from warehouse to Jetty and Shipping on board for export, per chest	0	1	0

Teas sent direct to Jetty sheds for shipment would only incur charges 1 and 5, or 1 anna 6 pie per chest.

Teas for sampling and sale in Calcutta.

1.	Removal from Steamer or Railway wagon to warehouse, per chest ...	0	0	6
2.	Warehouse rent for a period not exceeding one month, opening, closing, resoldering, taking and delivering samples to order under European supervision, laying down and storing, re-opening, delivery for examination, including cutting lead across, resoldering, and repairing, per chest ...	0	4	0

3. Additional rent for any time exceeding one month, per week or part of a week 0 0 6

4. Removal from warehouse to Jetty and Shipping on board for export, per chest 0 1 0

6. The present extent of the trade may be estimated at 460,000 chests annually. Assuming that 200,000 chests would pass through the warehouse in the course of a year, the income at the reduced charges proposed by the Committee would be 200,000 × 4 annas = Rs. 50,000, and the working expenses including interest, sinking fund and repairs would not, it is calculated, exceed Rs. 48,000.

7. The Commissioners will feel obliged by your informing them whether at the above revised rates you are prepared to accord your support to the scheme.

EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

Rates for Cotton Piece-Goods to the North-West and Punjab.

The Committee of the Chamber having had their attention drawn to an impending reduction in rates for the carriage of goods by the Western Rajpootana Railway to the North-West Provinces and the Punjab, and having before them a return showing a material increase in the traffic from Bombay in 1879 and 1880, addressed the Agent of the East Indian Railway on the necessity of at least equalizing the rates from

Howrah to the same destinations. This correspondence is still being carried on, and the Committee are led to hope that the authorities of the East Indian Railway, for the protection of their own interests, will be induced to lower the rates to the chief markets of the North-West and the Punjab, at an early date.

From Chamber to Agent East Indian Railway.

Calcutta, 26th March 1881.

In his letter of the 27th January, Mr. Leslie was good enough to give the reduced rates to be charged from the 1st February by the Great Indian Peninsular Railway for cotton piece-goods, twist, &c., and he closed it by saying that a concession of rates on the East Indian Railway, with the object of retaining the present Calcutta up-country trade in the staples likely to be affected by the reduction on the Bombay side, was under consideration.

And on the 2nd February the Agent obliged the Chamber with a comparative statement of the rates then ruling for English piece-goods from Howrah by the East Indian Railway, and from Bombay by the Great Indian Peninsular, the Bombay, Baroda, and Central India, and the Rajputana State Railways, to the different markets in the Upper Provinces.

The Committee of the Chamber are now informed that the Bombay, Baroda, and Central India Railway Company have, within the last few days, reduced their rates

for the carriage of piece-goods to Delhi and Agra, and that within the next month the reduction will be extended to other stations, including Lahore and Umritsur.

The rates for piece-goods by the various routes will then, the Committee believe, compare as follows:—

	Distance in Miles.	Total per 100 Maunds.			Rate per Mile per 100 Maunds, Pies.	
Howrah to Agra ...	843	222	0	0	50	
Bombay to Agra *via* Jubbulpore	1,123	263	4	0	45·00	40·00 G.I.P. 50·00 E.I.R.
Bombay to Agra *via* Sabarmatti	847	221	14	0	50·29	
Howrah to Delhi ...	954	250	0	0	50	
Bombay to Delhi *via* Jubbulpore	1,234	292	4	0	45·47	40· G.I.P. 50· E.I.R.
Bombay to Delhi *via* Sabarmatti	890	232	13	0	50·22	

From these figures it will be seen that the rates of the Bombay, Baroda, and Central India and Rajpootana State Railways are reduced to the level of those of the East Indian Railway Company, whilst the Great Indian Peninsular Railway mileage rates continue to be considerably less. The railway distances to the markets north of Agra being even shorter from Bombay than from Calcutta, it follows that, at the same rate per mile, it will cost more to send goods hence than from the Western port of India.

Goods can already be landed in Bombay on cheaper terms than in Calcutta; and it therefore requires no argument to show that, unless the railway charges on this side can be materially reduced, Bombay must, year by year, take away from Calcutta an increasing share of business, whilst reduced traffic to your railway will be the consequence.

The Committee are not aware whether any corresponding reduction has been made by the Bombay, Baroda, and Central India Railway Company in the downward rates for cotton, seeds, and other produce; but I am desired also to draw your attention to the fact that, even without further facilities in this respect, the tendency of the new line will be to attract produce to Bombay which has hitherto found its way to Calcutta. For example, it is understood that cotton, which formerly came from long distances to Cawnpore, is now finding its way to stations in the neighbourhood of Ajmere, whence it can be sent to Bombay at a saving of more than one rupee per bale as compared with the carriage from Cawnpore to Calcutta.

The Committee therefore desire me to urge on you the necessity of a timely movement towards a reduced scale of charges, in order that your traffic may be maintained, and that a check may be put to the actual and threatened diversion of a large portion of our trade to Bombay.

Calcutta, 6th April 1881.

Since addressing you on the 26th ultimo, it has been reported to the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, that further reductions have been made by the Bombay, Baroda, and Central India, and the Great Indian Peninsular Railway Companies in their charges for the carriage of English piece-goods to the Northern markets.

These further reductions, according to the information of the Committee, make the rates compare as follows:—

	Distance in Miles.	Total per 100 Maunds.	Rate per Mile per 100 Maunds. Pies.
Howrah to Delhi ...	954	250 0 0	50
Bombay to Delhi *via* Jubbulpore	1,234	232 13 0	36·22
Bombay to Delhi *via* Sabarmatti	890	213 8 8	46

The Committee again desire me to ask you to take this question into your serious consideration, and they trust that you will see the necessity of not only reducing your rates per mile to the same level as the other railways, but also the advantage of, in the future, anticipating any reductions in charges they may make.

EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

Delivery of Goods at Howrah and Terminal Charges.

The following correspondence will inform members of the endeavours made by the Committee to obtain the removal of the restrictions upon the delivery of produce brought down by rail to Howrah, caused by the new arrangements of the Railway Company, which required consignees to take delivery by their own employés instead of the former practice of delivery by the Company's contractors. The change in the system has been attended with great inconvenience, as merchants could not command the labor required or combine advantageously to employ an agency to perform the work hitherto done by the Company. 'But

the Committee's intervention has not been successful, neither in this respect nor in that of obtaining a larger allowance of time for removing goods from the railway premises.

From Chamber to East Indian Railway Co.

Calcutta, 3rd March 1881.

It has been represented to the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce by merchants, brokers and others interested in the transmission of produce by railway from up-country stations, that they have been subjected to serious inconvenience in consequence of the change in your arrangements for delivering consignments into carts and boats by your own contractors, and by reducing, by 24 hours, the time hitherto allowed for goods to remain in your sheds free of demurrage.

The Committee of the Chamber are of opinion that the representation which has been made to them is based on grounds of sufficient importance to justify their immediate recognition of the objections urged against the enforcement of the new rules, and an urgent submission by the Chamber for their cancellation.

The Committee are of opinion that, as the Railway Company have hitherto borne the expense of loading into carts or boats goods arriving at Howrah from up-country stations, any modification of that practice should have been attended with a corresponding reduction in railway carriage as compensation for the charge which consignees bear: other-

wise the new rule imposes the equivalent of an increased freight, and gives rise to endless disputes as to who should bear that additional charge.

The Committee greatly deprecate the adoption by the Company of a charge which practically results in the raising of their carrying rates, and they trust you will, on an early reconsideration of the relations between the Company and the commercial public, annul the rule which has occasioned so much inconvenience and discontent among the latter.

It is hardly necessary to point out that this is not a time to impose upon the trade of Calcutta restrictions and increased charges of any kind, seeing that there is so much competition threatened by increased Railway facilities on the other side of India.

With regard to the time allowed for goods to remain in the Railway sheds free of charge for demurrage, the Committee are of opinion, that its reduction from 48 to 24 hours, is totally insufficient for business purposes, and they hope the longer interval will be continued.

From East Indian Railway Co. to Chamber.

No. 3274, *Calcutta,* 16*th March* 1881.

In acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 3rd instant, in which the views of the Chamber are expressed regarding the present system of delivery at Howrah, and the time allowed for goods to remain in the Railway sheds free of charge, I beg to forward, for the information of the Committee, a memorandum of the proceedings during the

recent visit to this office of a deputation on behalf of the Calcutta merchants. It will be observed that the Company have agreed to grant the rebate allowed prior to the 1st of January, for all goods on which the refund was previously granted, but which will not apply to grain and seeds after the introduction of a reduced rate from the 1st of May next; and also to reduce the rate and abolish the terminal charge for piece goods; but the undue responsibility which would fall upon them, should they again undertake delivery of goods, renders the performance of the work by the Company or their contractor impracticable. To assist the merchants as far as possible, however, the Company have expressed their willingness, if a large majority of consignees will agree to employ any responsible firm of contractors as their agents for the performance of the loading work, in the same manner as Messrs. Pickford & Co. and others are employed in England, to render such agents all assistance in their power.

The Company are naturally anxious to facilitate traffic, and would be most willing to comply with the wishes of the merchants by returning to the former allowance, or even a longer period, if the space and accommodation at their disposal would permit, but a reversion to the 48 hours free time would result, in a busy season, to the goods yard and sidings being blocked with loaded trucks, and a delay of at least 24 hours in unloading a large number of wagons, thereby causing loss to the Company and seriously hampering traffic; I have therefore, in this instance, to regret that I am unable to accede to the wishes of the Chamber.

On the 9th instant Mr. King and Mr. Posner, on behalf of the Calcutta merchants, called on the Acting Agent

with whom was Mr. Carter, and stated their views with regard to the

Delivery of Goods at Howrah.

Terminal charges.

Length of time allowed free of demurrage.

The discontinuance of the present system of notice of arrival of goods, and

Reduced rate for piece goods.

Delivery of Goods at Howrah and Terminal Charges.

The deputation stated that they understood that the terminal charge of Rs. 20 per 1,000 maunds was instituted with the object of covering the expense occasioned to the Company in loading goods into carts and boats, and that as the charge was still enforced, the Company were bound to continue this work. The present system was most inconvenient. Merchants were not able to command the coolies they required, or to combine advantageously to employ contractors; the East Indian Railway were in a position to perform the work at less cost than individual firms, and the merchants would be prepared to take delivery on the platform, thus relieving the Company of responsibility for any loss that might afterwards occur. A reduced rate was not desired, and there would be no objection even to an increase if the Company would agree to place the goods in carts and boats. A rebate would not meet the wishes of the merchants who desire that the loading charges should be included in the freight, and would not object to an increase of Rs. 10 in the rates if their object could thereby be attained.

In reply the Acting Agent stated that a reduced rate would shortly be introduced to meet the increased expenditure merchants are occasioned by the Company having discontinued payment of the loading charges, and that from the 9th instant and until the reduction could be brought into force, a rebate of Rs. 3 for carted goods and Rs. 6 for boated goods would be given; this rebate would not however apply to the traffic brought down at "ruin rates." Mr. Campbell could not consider the question of abolition of the terminal charges; they were not instituted, as the deputation imagined, to cover the cost of loading goods into boats, &c., no such charges in fact being made for grain and seeds, but in common with all terminal charges, they were levied in consideration of the large expenditure incurred by the Railway Company in providing goods-sheds and suitable accommodation for dealing with a large traffic. With regard to the request that the Company would again undertake the delivery of goods by their contractors, Mr. Campbell regretted that he was unable to accede to the wishes of the deputation, as an undue responsibility would thereby be placed on the Company; he would, however, reserve for further consideration the point as to whether the Company would be prepared to load into carts and boats upon the consignees arranging to take delivery on the platform, and to relieve the Railway of any further liability.

Demurrage and Free Time at Howrah.

The deputation stated that the present free allowance of 24 hours is insufficient—the Railway receipt is often sent late, and demurrage accrues before delivery can be taken;

it is also necessary to examine the goods before taking delivery, but the present short time allowance will not permit of this, and that if 48 hours are allowed free, the Company will be very slightly affected, as traders are naturally anxious to obtain possession of their goods as early as possible. Mr. Campbell stated that a further free period could not be conceded, as the space occupied by goods on one day was required for another consignment on the next, and that if the godowns were not available, the yard would, in busy seasons, be blocked with wagons waiting to be unloaded.

Notice of Arrival of Goods.

It was proposed that a simple notice of arrival, in which the charges "to pay," "paid," and "weight of goods" will be omitted, should be forwarded to a place to be appointed in the Central Office, Calcutta, and that consignees shall send to this office, at a time to be fixed, for their notices; the deputation considered this a satisfactory arrangement.

Piece-goods.

Mr. Campbell stated that he was prepared to concede an equivalent to a reduction in the rates for piece-goods, by abolishing the terminal charge on this class of goods: the deputation stated that this traffic must eventually be lost to Calcutta, and that much of the capital engaged in the trade has already gone to Bombay: no figures, however, were adduced, and Mr. Carter observed that it would take years before the R. S. Railway could seriously compete, the smaller gauge preventing their carrying a large traffic, and the transhipments operated against them.

After some remarks as to the Port charges, and the statements by Mr. King that little of their goods passed through the Commissioners' hands, that there was no combination on the part of the Steamer Companies or brokers to maintain freights, and that the sea freight from Bombay was only 5 shillings a ton less than Calcutta, the Meeting terminated.

From Chamber to East Indian Railway Company.

Calcutta, 29th March 1881.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to thank you for your letter No. 3274 of the 16th instant in reply to their's of the 3rd idem regarding delivery of goods at Howrah, and for the memorandum of proceedings of a meeting with a Deputation on behalf of merchants interested in the question.

The Committee have received with regret and disappointment the announcement of your inability to continue the system of delivering goods by the Railway Company or their contractors inasmuch as there is no agency, such as you suggest, by which that work can be performed, and consignees will find it extremely difficult to clear their goods in such a manner as to avoid the delay which will subject them to your charge for demurrage after 24 hours. The Committee adhere to their opinion that that interval is far too short for such purposes, and hope you will, on reconsideration, be able to modify your decision in this respect.

The Committee note that you have agreed to grant a rebate for carted and boated goods on all classes of goods

on which the refund was allowed prior to the 1st January, with effect from the 9th instant ; but they submit that such resumption should, in all fairness, have effect from the date on which the established usage of the Company was disturbed, and not from date of notice of its restoration ; and the Committee hope you will grant all consignees rebate from the 1st January, prior to which date the refund was allowed.

From East Indian Railway to Chamber.

Calcutta, 27th April 1881.

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th ultimo, in which the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce urge the reconsideration of the questions which have arisen in connection with the delivery on goods at Howrah.

In the first instance I would remind the Committtee that during the period that the Company performed the work of delivery complaints were of daily occurrence, and that more than one European firm and a very considerable number of native merchants requested that the system now in force might be adopted.

During the visit from the deputation on behalf of the merchants, it was stated that the reduction proposed for the grain traffic was not desired, and that traders would be willing to accept an increase of Rs. 10 in the rates if the Company would continue to deliver into carts and boats. This proposal, which totally ignored the interests of the native trading community, would, if carried out,

be considerably more costly than the present arrangement, and it is therefore understood that the expense incurred by consignees does not form the ground of the objection to it.

With the exception of the difficulty in inducing an agency to perform the work, no reason has been assigned why the Railway Company, who contract merely to convey goods from station to station, should be called upon to accept the liablity and constant embroilment with their constituents necessarily entailed by the work of delivery.

With regard to the remark of the Committee as to there being no agency in Calcutta similar to Messrs. Pickford & Co., in England, I would beg to suggest that the Company's late contractors would in all probability be as willing to undertake the delivery of goods to the public as they were to perform the same work for the Railway, and that, should they decline, an advertisement calling upon contractors to quote rates for the supply of the required labor would not remain unanswered.

I regret that for the reasons adduced in my No. 3274 of the 16th ultimo it is impossible to allow a longer period free of demurrage.

I further regret to be unable to concur with the views expressed by the Committee regarding the date from which the rebate should have effect. Due notice was given that the Company would not continue to grant it after the 1st of January, and the virtual increase in freight was doubtless taken into consideration in arranging forward contracts; moreover from Mr. Lorraine King's

previously quoted statement that the merchants were prepared to accept an increase of Rs. 10 per 100 maunds in the cost of freight, it is evident that the withdrawal of the rebate of Rs. 3 and 6 per 100 maunds would not appreciably affect produce transactions.

Upon the representation of the Chamber that reductions were necessary to retain the traffic of the port; the Company have agreed to lower the rates and again grant the refund, but the competition which rendered this necessary did not, to any extent, make itself felt until the middle of March, and I cannot consent to the rebate being made on consignments dealt with prior to the 9th of that month.

INTERFERENCE BY THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY COMPANY WITH THE COAL TRADE OF BENGAL.

The action of the East Indian Railway Company in competing with the various Coal Companies for the supply of coal to the public, especially to the State and other Railways of Upper India, has naturally aroused great dissatisfaction amongst all interested in the coal industry. The Committee have addressed the Government of India on the subject, and they understand that their representation, and the Memorial annexed, are having careful consideration: and in view of the expressed intentions of the present Government to encourage private

enterprise, they do not doubt that a remedy will be applied.

From Chamber to the Government of India.

Calcutta, 23rd March 1881.

The representatives of several of the Coal Companies of Bengal have urged upon the attention of the Chamber of Commerce the necessity of appealing to the Government of India in their behalf against the action of the East Indian Railway Company, in producing supplies of coal from their Kurhurballee and Serampore coal-fields in excess of their own requirements, and disposing of such surplus to other coal-consuming concerns, whereby the interests of the Coal Companies have been, and are at the present moment, seriously affected.

The circumstances which have been submitted for the consideration of the Committee of the Chamber are, in their judgment, such as to demand a careful investigation by the Government of the position which the East Indian Railway Company are stated to have assumed as active competitors with the coal industries of this Province; and they respectfully place before His Excellency the Governor-General in Council the following remarks upon the subject.

Coal mines were worked in the Damooda Valley many years before the East Indian Railway was commenced; but the mining was then on a very small scale, and was carried on by the Zemindars of the district, the coal finding its way to Calcutta by the Damooda river.

When the East Indian Railway was in course of construction a branch line was made to Raneegunge, in order that the Company might obtain their supplies from that district, and also carry coal to Calcutta direct, instead of by the dangerous and precarious river route.

No sooner was this line opened than those Zemindars who had means increased their operations, and European capitalists purchased interests in the lands and entered largely into the same business. The result was that the Railway Company, who were the principal consumers, obtained a cheap and abundant supply of coal, and the Calcutta market was well stocked at prices much lower than hitherto had been the case when supplies had almost entirely to be imported.

The increasing demands of the East Indian Railway, the requirements of the newly projected Eastern Bengal and Mutlah Railways, and the enlarged operations of manufacturing industries in Calcutta and its suburbs, greatly developed the coal trade. Some large Companies were formed, and these and the previously established collieries were well able to meet the general demand and to give coal to consumers at a moderate cost, at the same time yielding fair returns to their proprietors.

Some 12 years ago the Railway Company commenced making the Chord Line, and at the same time acquired a newly discovered coal-field, to which they opened a branch line, and commenced mining operations upon their own account.

The Company's eventual retirement from a market which had so essentially promoted their operations, left the

private coal owners in a position of great embarrassment, as they were deprived of an important outlet for the greater part of their produce, and the income on their invested capital was, in consequence, generally largely reduced, and in some instances totally lost.

In course of time, however, the progress of railway construction in Upper India, and the expansion of local manufacturing industries, again restored prosperity to the coal trade, and additions to the large capital already invested were made with the view to render the collieries competent to meet the increasing demands of commerce, and the requirements of all the coal-consuming industries dependent on the coal-fields of Bengal.

But, as the Committee learn, the trade is again seriously interfered with by the Railway Company entering the coal market as dealers on a scale of considerable importance.

The Committee are not aware under what circumstances Parliament conferred on the East Indian Railway Company powers which, the Committee are informed, are not granted to any Railway Company in the United Kingdom ; but, whatever those circumstances were, the Committee trust the Government will now interpose to protect the rights of private Coal Companies, by keeping the Railway Company well within such powers as may have been granted to them.

The Committee of the Chamber believe that the allegations of the representatives of Coal Companies, that the Railway Company are selling to the public and are under contracts for the supply of coal to other Railway Com-

panies, can be substantiated ; and they are of opinion that by raising for the purpose of sale in the open market more than a mere surplus above their own wants the Railway Company have encroached upon the rights and interests of the proprietors of private property, in violation of the 51st clause of the Contract between the Company and the Secretary of State for India, dated the 22nd December 1879, which provides that "the Company shall not, "during the continuance of this contract, without the "sanction of the Secretary of State in writing first obtain-"ed, engage in or carry on any business other than the "business which is the subject of this contract."

In bringing this matter before His Excellency the Governor-General in Council, the Committee do not advocate the cause of the Coal Companies further than with the desire that they should not be placed at any disadvantage by the infringement of their rights, and with the hope that the policy of the Government may at all times be directed to the encouragement and protection of private enterprise.

To

THE MOST HON'BLE THE MARQUIS OF RIPON,

K.G., P.C., G.M.S.I.,

Viceroy and Governor-General of India in Council.

The Respectful Memorial of the undersigned Companies and Persons interested in the Coal-Trade of Bengal

SHEWETH,

YOUR Memorialists crave leave to address your Lordship in support of the late representation by the Chamber

of Commerce, Calcutta, against the procedure of the East Indian Railway Company in selling coal to other Railway Companies, the State Railways, and the public, on the following grounds :—

1. We submit that such sale of coal by the East Indian Railway Company is illegal and is opposed to public policy.

2. It is illegal; inasmuch as the East Indian Railway Company, being an incorporated Company of carriers merely, are precluded by that circumstance from selling coal without first obtaining a private Act of Parliament allowing them to sell. This permission Parliament would not award consistently with the principles which have hitherto regulated the Company by that authority to public carriers. Railways in England have been allowed to incorporate with their land transport a subsidiary inland steam service or a canal service; but, inasmuch as these subsidiary services are those of carriers, this extension of the scope of Railway enterprise has not violated the general principle, enforced by Parliament, of limiting Railway Companies to the work exclusively of carriers. This principle was strictly observed by Parliament with regard to the East Indian Railway Company and other Indian Railways. The Acts by which they are incorporated, and their Articles of Association, do not provide for their engaging in any work except that of carriers by rail. In 1866, or thereabout, when the Eastern Bengal Railway Company desired to establish the line of steamers they are now running from Goalundo eastward, they were stopped until they could remove at home the disability from engaging in such service, which was imposed on them by the ori-

ginal Act for their incorporation and by their Articles of Association.

3. The legal status of the East Indian Railway Company is that defined by Parliament and the Company's Articles of Association; and while their status, as thus defined, precludes their selling coal to the State and Guaranteed Railways and to the public, they are further precluded from such sale by the Indian License Act. It is not open to the Government to grant the Company a license as coal merchant or colliery proprietor for the sale of coal, without contravening the spirit of the Acts of Parliament by which the Company are restricted to the work exclusively of carriers by rail.

4. The purchase of the East Indian Railway by the Government has not altered the legal status of the Company—that railway, under its designation (in the new contract with Government) of "the undertaking." having been handed over to the Company, on the 1st January 1880, for the purposes of the new contract, which are limited to the performance by the Railway Company of the duties of carriers by rail. It is also stated in the new contract that "a separate agreement shall be made between the Secretary of State and the Company as to the working of the Serampore and Kurhurballee coal fields which are intended to be part of the undertaking. Provided, nevertheless, that the rent payable to Government in respect of the said coal fields shall not exceed the aggregate of the fixed rents now payable in respect of the same." The Kurhurballee Coal Fields being part of "the undertaking," which latter can be worked only for the carriage of passsengers, livestock, merchandize and

goods generally necessary, the coal fields can be worked by the East Indian Railway Company, and its produce be disposed of only in such way as shall confine the entire proceedings of the Company in respect thereof within their functions as carriers, and as managers of a railway for the sole purpose of economical and efficient working as carriers. The sale of coal by the East Indian Railway Company to State and Guaranteed Railways and to the public is as incompatible with the new obligations as it was with the old legal *footing* or *status* of the Company.

5. "The separate agreement between the Secretary of State and the Company, for the working of the Serampore and Kurhurballee Coal Fields" as "part of the undertaking," has not been published; but it is reasonable to infer—indeed no other inference is admissible—that the working of the fields must be restricted by the agreement to the purposes of the undertaking, that is, to the production of so much coal yearly as may be required for consumption on the East Indian Railway. The raising of coal in the Serampore and Kurhurballee coal fields in extra quantities for sale to other Guaranteed and State Railways and to the public would be a work foreign to the purpose of the "undertaking" of the East Indian Railway Company, and as such, it would be as much beyond the scope of the arrangement by which those coal fields have been made part of the "undertaking," as it would be beyond the functions of carriers and of managers of the East Indian Railway, to which the East Indian Railway Company are restricted by the Acts of Parliament under which they are incorporated, and by their Articles of Association.

6. If, notwithstanding, it has been stipulated by Government in the separate agreement with the East Indian Railway Company respecting the Serampore and Kurhurballee coal fields, that coal from those fields shall be supplied to other Guaranteed and State Railways, at rates to be determined somehow, and may be sold to the public, then we submit that such stipulation, besides being opposed to public policy, is void, for the reason that it was not competent for the East Indian Railway Company to enter into such an agreement, it being beyond the scope of their Articles of Association and of the Acts by which they have been incorporated as a Company of carriers.

7. If we are correct in the views here submitted, that in selling coal the East Indian Railway Company are overstepping the bounds within which their functions as carriers are confined by the Acts of Parliament incorporating them and by their Articles of Association, then the obligation of Government to stop such illegal sale is manifest and complete, even though the unlawful act were expedient in some minor respects; but the illegal act is also inexpedient and opposed to public policy in several respects, as follows:—

(a.)—If in England, any one principle of control over Railways is more firmly held than another, it is that Railway Directors should act so as to be beyond the suspicion of favouring some persons or business; but it is impossible that the East Indian Railway Company can be free from the suspicion of favouring the transport of the coal of its own collieries so long as the Company sells coal to the public and to Guaranteed and other Railways. Already has it been stated, for some time past, that the East In-

dian Railway Company has entered into contracts with Railways up-country for the supply of coal at prices including Railway freight, which leave the Company free to credit less than the ordinary Railway freight to revenue, and more, by a corresponding amount, to the Kurhurballee Concern as the price of the coal. Some figures in the last half-yearly report of the Company confirm this.

(*b.*)—The unequal competition between the East Indian Railway Company's colliery and collieries worked by private enterprise must end in the East Indian Railway Company supplying coal to all the Railways in the Bengal Presidency. It would not be wise to let all those Railways draw their supply from but one colliery (and that too, in the position of a large consumer of coal, which would always supply its own wants first.) Whenever the Kurhurballee supply failed—and it failed in 1879—the Railways in Bengal, other than the East Indian Railway, would be left without coal—nay, without fuel; for wood fuel could not be suddenly got together in large quantities, and even English coal cannot be had on short notice (unless at extravagant prices), except in quantities limited by the quantity of cheap outward freight available. All such supplies, moreover, would be taken up by the East Indian Railway Company for itself (all other Railways being left in the lurch) in this case we are supposing a casual failure of the Kurhurballee supply three or four years hence, when the several Coal Companies shall have shut up their upper collieries in the Raneegunge district, on account of the transfer of their principal customers to the East Indian Railway. So long as the East Indian Railway did not compete in the coal market, the upper collieries in

Sanktoria, Sitarampore, and Kurhurballee of the several Coal Companies, were a reserve for the unfailing supply of steam coal to all the Bengal and Up-country Railways, including the East Indian Railway. But the Coal Companies will not keep open these collieries for casual demands from the Railways, if the regular demands from those Railways be transferred to the East Indian Railway Company's Kurhurballee colliery. Once miners are dispersed, it will be difficult to get them together again, or to get them at all on short notice, and the number of miners limits the quantity of yearly coal production. The distribution of the miners among the collieries of different Companies also helps to keep together a larger number, and to create a larger reserve of coal on hand, than would occur if all the miners were to be confined to one colliery. Each proprietor strives to keep his miners together by raising coal even when the demand for it is slack. This pressure, when it pervades several collieries, must produce more coal, and keep together more miners than would be available if there was but one source of supply, *viz.*, the Kurhurballee mine of the East Indian Railway Company.

(*c.*)—Besides this great risk of stoppage of the Railways in the Bengal Presidency, on any casual failure of the Kurhurballee supply of coal, there is the certainty of eventual loss to the East Indian Railway Company, if the Kurhurballee coal mines of that Company be made available for the ordinary supply of all other railways; for the Kurhurballee Field is not inexhaustible, regard being had to the limit of the depths at which coal has been worked in this country. When the supply fails, the cost of coal to the East Indian Railway Company will be enhanced beyond all past experience.

(*d.*)—While the unlawful competition of the East Indian Railway Company's colliery will work no good eventually to either the East Indian Railway or other Railways in the Bengal Presidency, it meantime inflicts a serious and unlooked-for injury on those who are engaged in developing a coal industry, which is the parent or promoter of other industries. The collieries in Sitarampore, Sanktoria, and Kurhurballee belonging to Coal Companies, especially the Kurhurballee mines, depend upon Guaranteed and State Railways to take off the bulk of their yearly production. Capital has been laid out upon them in view of this demand; and the diversion of that demand to the East Indian Railway Company's colliery would be a heavy blow and discouragement to the promoters of an industry, which, if properly encouraged, will yet effect great results in the Upper Provinces if the freight of coal to those provinces be cheapened.

(*e.*)—All this present injury to Coal Companies, and eventual injury to the Railway Companies in the Bengal Presidency, is being permitted because Government tolerates unlawful acts of the East Indian Railway Company, and an unjust and unequal competition. On the latter head it should be remembered that the outlay for bringing the Kurhurballee mines of the East Indian Railway Company into working order was provided out of revenue; that is, it was provided, not from shareholders' capital, but at the expense of the tax-payers in British India; for the outlay, by reducing the amount of net revenue, increased *pro-tanto* the amount of guaranteed interest, less net traffic receipts, which is paid out of the revenues of British India. Doubtless, too, the machinery and plant for the

Kurhurballee Concern were carried to Giridi free of cost for freight, like Railway stores for revenue purposes. Furthermore, the Concern is not debited with general charges and expenses of general management such as the collieries worked by private enterprise have to bear. In these three important respects then, the East Indian Railway Company's colliery has an advantage over other collieries which renders the competition unequal and unfavourable to the latter.

8. We have shown that the sale of coal by the East Indian Railway Company is an illegal act that should be restrained and not supported by the Government, and that the Company contravenes thereby considerations of public policy, which policy suggests all possible encouragement of private enterprise in the coal industry, and requires that the Company, confining themselves strictly to their duties as public carriers, should abstain from courses that must expose them to the suspicion of favouring that part of the coal traffic which is carried by rail on their own account.

9. We have also pointed out that, if the coal requirements of all Railways in the Bengal Presidency be provided from the Kurhurballee mines of the East Indian Railway Company, the supply to those Railways will be precarious, while the mines will be prematurely exhausted; and that the vantage ground from which the Company assails important interests of the coal industry, having been acquired at the expense of the general taxation of the Empire, it is unbecoming, or unseemly on this score, as well as on account of the illegality of the act, that the sale of coal by the Company to the State and Guaranteed Railways and to the public, should be continued by the Company, or tolerated by the Government.

Your Memorialists, therefore, humbly pray your Lordship to take into consideration the subject-matter of the present Memorial, and to pass such a Resolution thereon as will cause the sale of coal by the said Railway Company to the State and Guaranteed Railways and to the public to be discontinued.

And your Memorialists as in duty bound will ever pray.

THE MAIL DEPARTURE FROM BOMBAY.

The Committee regret that so little success has attended the Memorial to the Secretary of State adopted at the public meeting of the 8th January last, supported though it was by the Government of India.

It will be for the consideration of the incoming Committee whether any further steps can usefully be taken with a view to obtaining a modification in the present highly inconvenient mail arrangements.

The members of the Chamber are doubtless aware that the dates of departure of the Mail Steamers are fixed annually, and that six months' notice of any change is required by the P. and O. Company.

To the Most Honorable
The Marquis of Hartington,
Secretary of State for India.

Calcutta, 8th January 1881.

The Humble Petition of the undersigned Bankers, Merchants, and others, engaged in trade with Great Britain, Europe, and America.

Sheweth,—That for upwards of a year the departure of the Overland Mail Steamers from Bombay has been fixed for Saturdays, which, giving Wednesdays for the despatch of mails from Calcutta, has proved a convenient arrangement for the postal requirements of this city.

That as this arrangement deprived the Bombay public of the usual Saturday half-holiday, the Chamber of Commerce there urged upon Your Lordship and the Government of India their desire to have the day changed to Friday.

That as this arrangement was alleged to be inconvenient also to the commercial public of the United Kingdom, on account of their Indian correspondence arriving so close upon the day of despatch, Memorials were presented to Your Lordship praying for such an amendment of the present system as would ensure deliveries early in the week.

That, in consequence of such representations, Your Lordship addressed the Government of India on the 19th August last, expressing the conclusion that the plan of having one fixed day of the week all the year round for the departure from India must be given up; and that, if this concession were made by India, the precise day

for departure of the mail from Bombay might be left to be mainly determined by the convenience of the mercantile community, subject to the condition that the mails should arrive in London not later than Tuesday.

That the best arrangement in Your Lordship's judgment to secure this result would be to have the departure from Bombay on Thursday in the fair season, and on Monday in the monsoon, which would admit of the mails leaving Calcutta on Monday and Friday, respectively.

That the conclusions arrived at by Your Lordship were communicated by the Government of India to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, accompanied by suggestions as to time of despatch from Calcutta, *viz.*, on Tuesday in the fair season, and on Saturday in the monsoon.

That in reply to the foregoing proposals, it was submitted that a fixed day would be the more convenient arrangement for India; but failing this, and as there were very strong objections to both Monday and Saturday, Tuesday and Friday were asked for as alternate days for Calcutta.

That in submitting the correspondence relative to this question, the Government of India remarked, in the 4th paragraph of their letter No. 57 of the 2nd November last, as follows :—"Considering the importance of the "commercial interests represented by the Bengal Chamber "and the serious inconvenience which would result from "the closure of the mail at Calcutta on Monday, we con-"sider it essential that the mails should not leave Bombay "in the fair season before Friday;"—thus showing a right appreciation of the objections raised by the Chamber

of Commerce to an earlier departure than Friday from Bombay.

That in the event of the mail steamer leaving Bombay on Friday evening, the condition prescribed by Your Lordship that the mails shall arrive in London not later than Tuesday might be transgressed, but that this might be overcome either by an accelerated speed by the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, or by the starting of the mail steamer early in the morning instead of in the evening,—an arrangement which would have the further advantage of obviating the detention at Bombay for a whole day of the mails of the rest of India.

That Your Memorialists have received with deep disappointment the announcement of Your Lordship's decision, which, while it deprives the Calcutta community of the days asked for, has given them an even more inconvenient arrangement than was at first suggested.

That they would beg to draw your attention to the fact that, in their opinion, Your Lordship has been misinformed as to the importance of the interval of three days, which, under Your Lordship's decision, must elapse between the receipt and departure of the mails in London. Such an interval may be desirable, but its importance bears no comparison with the necessity of choosing the most convenient days for despatch of the mails from India. Indian correspondence consists in great part of accounts, market-advices, and references to telegrams: such portion of the correspondence requires no interval; the direct references to mail letters involve little trouble, and, if necessary, may be postponed for a week without inconvenience.

That the magnitude of the trade of this port and the great variety of articles which form its staple imports and exports involve heavy correspondence, and the preparation of these multifarious documents and accounts necessitates a far greater amount of labor in connection with the despatch of mails than is required at other places of business either in India or at Home.

That for this reason at least two days are required, and consequently a Monday closing must inevitably result in work being carried on on Sunday, thereby not only depriving Europeans of the Christian Sabbath, but also enforcing the attendance of their native employés, who equally require this day for rest.

That the arrangement fixed upon gives to Calcutta, for a considerable part of the year, Saturday as mail-day, a day which has been invariably and universally devoted in part to recreation and cessation from labor.

That the privilege of a Saturday half-holiday has been very generally granted at Home under the influence of public opinion; but Your Lordship's decision renders work on that day compulsory in Calcutta, and deprives the commercial public of the partial relief from labor to which they have been long accustomed.

That Your Memorialists, who work in the trying climate of Bengal, especially require opportunities such as Saturday affords for surch relaxation, and more particularly during the monsoon months.

That, while anxious to consult the convenience of all other communities, Your Memorialists respectfully

protest against an arrangement which so completely sacrifices their interests, and they respectfully urge that the largest centre of commerce in India deserves some consideration at Your Lordship's hands.

Your Memorialists therefore pray that, at least, the proposal of the Government of India, in their letter of 18th September, that the days of departure of the mails from Calcutta, the Tuesday and Saturday be accepted—not as the most convenient to Calcutta, but as, upon the whole, the most suitable for all the parties interested in the question.

The Memorial was signed by 510 *Merchants, Bankers, Brokers and Memberes of the Trades' Association.*

No. 1759.

Government of India, Department of Finance and Commerce, Separate Revenue, Post Office.

Fort William, the 30th December 1880.

READ the following :—

From the Government of India, to the Secretary of State for India,—No. 57, *dated* 2*nd November* 1880.

On receipt of your Lordship's Despatches Nos. 270 and 271, dated 19th August, upon the subject of the day on which the weekly mail for Great Britain should leave Bombay, we thought it expedient to consult afresh the commercial communities of the three Presidency Towns, whose interests are chiefly affected. We forward herewith our correspondence * with these Bodies.

2. In deference to the wishes of those interested in Great Britain, and to your Lordship's conclusion as com-

municated to us in Despatch No 271, the Indian Chambers of Commerce consent, with more or less reluctance, to give up the plan of a fixed day of the week for the departure of the mail from Bombay all the year round, and on this basis consent to a Monday evening departure during the monsoon.

3. The Madras and Bombay Chambers would also accept your Lordship's proposal that the mail should leave Bombay on Thursday evening in the fair season. But to this the Bengal Chamber of Commerce strongly object, on the ground that it would involve the closure of the mails in Calcutta on Monday evening.

4. Considering the importance of the commercial interests represented by the Bengal Chamber, and the serious inconvenience which would result from the closure of the mail at Calcutta on Monday, we consider it essential that the mails should not leave Bombay in the fair season before Friday.

5. On behalf of those in Great Britain interested in the matter, your Lordship may, perhaps, hesitate to accept this conclusion, on the ground that it might involve a transgression of the condition which you prescribe, that the Mails shall arrive in London not later than Tuesday. This objection would be entirely overcome if the Peninsular and Oriental Company could undertake to perform the journey in one day less than their contract time. At least this much time is constantly saved on the outward route during the monsoon, and we apprehend that the Company would have no serious difficulty in ensuring the delivery in London on Tuesday of mails leaving Bombay on Friday evening in the fair season.

6. If, however, the Peninsular and Oriental Company cannot undertake this, we are assured by our Director-General of the Post Office that the same object might be gained if the mail steamer were to leave Bombay in the morning at 10 AM., instead of in the evening. In two letters to the General Post Office, which will be found in the Appendix, dated 16th March and 21st June last, Mr. Monteath has explained that if the transit of the homeward mail through Egypt can be effected as quickly as that of the outward mail, namely in 17 hours (and we can think of no reason why this should not be done,) then a mail leaving Bombay at 10 A.M. should reach Alexandria at 3 P.M. in ample time for the Mail steamer to leave the harbour by daylight, which is understood to be an indispensable condition. A mail leaving Bombay at 6-30 P.M. will not, at the contract rate of speed, reach Suez before 6-30 A.M. or leave Alexandria before 7 A.M. the next day. Thus a mail leaving Bombay at 10 P.M. would pass out of Alexandria no less than 16 hours earlier than if it left Bombay 8½ hours later, namely, at 6½ P.M. The whole of this 16 hours would be gained by the mails of all India, excepting Bombay. The Bombay mails would gain 7½ hours.

7. If this apparently careful calculation is correct, it would be acceptable to commercial interests throughout India excepting at Bombay. The departure of the mail steamer at 10 A.M. would be distasteful and, we fear, inconvenient to the commercial community of Bombay; but we should hope that if it be practically demonstrated that if the mail steamer leave Bombay at 10 A.M. the mails from all India will be delivered in London a day earlier than if

the steamer leaves Bombay at sunset, the Bombay community would cheerfully acquiesce in the inconvenience to local interests involved in that alternative for the fair season. We could not expect that community to consent, under any circumstances, to a Monday morning departure.

8. While we strongly urge, on behalf of Indian interests, that the weekly mails should not leave Bombay in the fair season before Friday, we now leave the matter in your Lordship's hands. You will doubtless telegraph your decision.

Telegram from the Secretary of State for India, to the Government of India, dated 23rd December 1880.

Your Postal 57. After full consideration I have decided that the mails for Europe shall leave Bombay at five o'clock in the afternoon, on Thursday in the fair season, and on Tuesday in the monsoon.

Copy of the correspondence forwarded to the Director-General of the Post Office of India, to the Governments of Bengal, Bombay, and Madras, and the Chambers of Commerce, Bengal, Bombay, Madras and Rangoon.

By order, &c.,
(Sd.) STEPHEN JACOB,
Assistant Secretary to the Government of India.

From Chamber to the Government of India.

Calcutta the 3rd January 1881.

I am instructed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your No. 1759 being copy of a letter No. 57, dated 2nd November 1880, addressed by the Government to the Secretary of State for India on the subject of the days of despatch of the weekly mails for Great Britain, and of a telegram dated 23rd December 1880, received in reply. The Committee desire to thank the Government of India for the endeavour made to procure for Calcutta a convenient mail day, and they deeply regret that the Secretary of State should have so completely disregarded the interests of the Capital of India as to have fixed departures from Bombay which must involve for Calcutta mail days on Saturday during the monsoon and Monday in the fair season, than which no arrangement could have been discovered more unsuitable to the commercial requirements of this great business centre.

Immediately on the publication of the Secretary of State's decision, a telegram was sent direct from the Chamber of Commerce to the Marquis of Hartington, as follows :—

"Interests of Calcutta, the principal Commercial city of India, completely ignored in proposed system of despatching mails which involves work on Sundays and Saturdays. We claim hearing before alteration takes effect"—to which as yet no reply has been received. The determination of the Secretary of State has created a feeling of the greatest dissatisfaction amongst all classes

of the commercial public, as the result must be the entire loss of Saturday as a half holiday, and during the greater part of the year the making of Sunday a day of work.

The Committee understand that a Memorial is being prepared which will be largely signed, and of which a copy will be forwarded for your information; and meanwhile I am desired by the Committee respectfully to urge the Government of India to do all that is possible to obtain a reversal of the decision arrived at, and to request that a telegram be sent recommending a reconsideration of the whole matter.

No. 4. of 1881.

Government of India, Department of Finance and Commerce, Separate Revenue, Post Office.

To the Right Hon'ble the Marquis of Hartington, M. P., Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India. Fort William, the 26th January 1881.

My Lord Marquis,—With reference to your telegram dated 23rd December 1880, we have the honour to forward a Memorial from the merchants, bankers and tradesmen in Calcutta protesting against Your Lordship's decision that the days for the departure of the mail steamer from Bombay shall be Thursday in the fair season and Tuesday in the monsoon.

2. We expressed our views upon the subject in our Despatch No. 57, dated 2nd November 1880, and as the matter has been so recently under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government it does not seem necessary for us to recapitulate those views. We need only state

that the effect of the decision arrived at by Your Lordship is keenly felt by the Calcutta community.

We have the honour to be, My Lord Marquis, Your Lordship's most obedient humble servants, (Signed) Ripon, F. P. Haines, W. Stokes, Rivers Thompson, J. Gibbs, D. M. Stewart, E. Baring.

India Office, London, 3rd March 1881.

Financial N. 88.

To His Excellency the Most Honourable the Governor-General of India in Council.

My Lord Marquis. I have considered in Council Your Excellency's letter, dated the 8th of January No. 4 (Post Office), transmitting a Memorial from the merchants, bankers and tradesmen in Calcutta, protesting against the decision of Her Majesty's Government that the days for departure of the mail steamer from Bombay shall be Thursday in the fair season and Tuesday is the monsoon.

2. I have also received various telegrams and letters from the Chamber of Commerce and Trades Association of Calcutta to the same effect.

3. In my Despatch of the 19th of August 1880, No. 271, I informed Your Excellency that the representations of the mercantile community of the United Kingdom, regarding the inconvenience of the arrangements at that time existing for the despatch of the mails from India, led me to consider it essential that a change should be made in such a manner as to secure their

arrival in London not later than Tuesday in each week, and I suggested that this result might be attained by despatching them from Bombay on Thursday in the fair season and Monday in the monsoon, leaving Calcutta on Monday and Friday respectively.

4. The suggestion was accepted by the Chambers of Commerce at Madras and Bombay, but the Calcutta Chamber strongly objected to so much of the proposal as involved a departure from Bombay on Thursday in the fair season, which would necessitate the closure of the mail in Calcutta on Monday evening. Your Excellency, in consideration of the serious inconvenience of that course, stated your view that it was essential that the mail should not leave Bombay in the fair season before Friday. As, however, this would not bring the mails into London till Wednesday for the greater part of the year, you expressed a hope that either the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company might undertake to perform the journey in one day less than the contract time, or the same object be gained by the mail leaving Bombay in the morning instead of the evening, the transit through Egypt being also accelerated.

5. Immediately on the receipt of Your Excellency's letter I communicated it to Her Majesty's Post Master-General, with the view of seeing how far it might be possible to meet the wishes of the Calcutta community in one or other of the methods proposed.

6. In reply I was informed that the Peninsular and Oriental Company had pointed out to the General Post Office that the acceleration of the service between

Bombay and Suez by one day, would bring the contract speed up to very nearly 12 knots, which in practice would require the vessels to be driven at a rate of nearly 13 knots an hour, and that the tender for such a rate involved an increase of the subsidy by 40,000£ per annum.

7. To ensure a delivery in London not later than Tuesday morning, the Peninsular and Oriental Company considered that the latest date at which the mails should leave Bombay should be Tuesday during the south-west monsoon and Thursday during the north-east monsoon, at 5 P. M. in each case, so that the requisite condition could not be secured by the adoption of the proposal that the mails should, in the fair season, leave Bombay at 10 o'clock in the morning on Friday.

8. Hence it became evident that the wishes of the community at Calcutta could not be complied with, unless at the expense of the public in the United Kingdom and in other parts of India; and the question which I had to consider was, whether it would be most desirable that the mails should be timed to arrive in London on Monday or Tuesday morning. Considering that the adoption of the former day would have involved the despatch of the mails from Calcutta on Sunday during the greater part of the year, I, with the concurrence of the Treasury, accepted the proposal made by Her Majesty's Post Master-General as the best arrangement which could be made under all the circumstances, namely, that the mails should leave Bombay at five o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday in the fair season, and on Tuesday in the monsoon.

9. This decision was telegraphed to Your Excellency on the 23rd of December, and I trust that the correspondence which accompanied my Despatch of the 13th of January, No. 13, will have shown Your Government that the determination was not arrived at without a careful consideration of the wishes of the mercantile community of Calcutta, and of your representations on their behalf.

10. I request Your Excellency to communicate to the memorialists a copy of this Despatch, and to express to them my regret that, in a matter affecting the convenience of so important a community, I should have found it impracticable to meet their wishes.

I have the honor to be, My Lord Marquis, Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,—HARTINGTON.

From Chamber to Secretary of State for India.

Calcutta, 3rd January 1881.

Your Lordship's decision fixing the departure of the mail steamer from Bombay on days and at hours which will involve the closing of the mails here on Saturdays during the monsoon, and on Mondays in the fair season, has been received with universal disappointment and dissatisfaction.

It is not possible to overstate the hardship occasioned by this indifference to our interests. Labouring throughout the year in a trying climate, we are now called upon to give up one of the few opportunities of relaxation

which the Saturday half-holiday affords, and for a great part of the year to continue work even on Sundays, thereby surrendering the rest which the Sabbath is intended to provide.

This appears to us the more difficult to understand, inasmuch as it is absolutely unnecessary, a scheme for the departure of the mails which we have put before the Government of India fairly meeting the convenience of all interested without altogether sacrificing that of Calcutta.

The variety and extent of the trade of this port entitle us to a full share of consideration, and this we respectfully claim at Your Lordship's hands.

The Committee of this Chamber understand that a public memorial is in course of preparation, and will be forwarded to Your Lordship on an early date; they do not therefore now enter more fully into the reasons which prompted them to send Your Lordship on Friday last the following telegram :—

"Interests of Calcutta, the principal commercial city of India, completely ignored in proposed system of despatching mails which involves work on Sundays and Saturdays. We claim hearing before alteration takes effect."

From Chamber to Secretary of State for India.

Calcutta, 12th January 1881.

We have the honor to confirm the letter addressed to Your Lordship on the 3rd instant, duplicate of which is hereto annexed.

We have also the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Your Lordship's telegram, in reply to the Chamber's first message praying for a reconsideration of the decision arrived at relative to the mail day question, and on the receipt of which we ventured to transmit a second message, as follows :—"Your Lordship's telegram received. Inconvenience to Calcutta by proposed despatch of mails is so very serious, and discontent resulting so great, that we again beg reconsideration."

We trust Your Lordship will pardon the importunity with which we have taken the liberty to urge this point upon Your Lordship's attention, the importance of which is attested by the memorial which was adopted at a public meeting held on the 8th instant, and which will reach Your Lordship through the Government of India.

Fort William, the 22nd February 1881.

Read the following :—

From the Secretary of State for India, to the Government of India. No. 13, *dated* 13*th January.* 1881.

In Your Excellency's letter, dated the 2nd of November, No. 57 (Post Office), a strong desire was expressed that the weekly mails should not leave Bombay in the fair season before Friday, and reasons were given for believing that, by an acceleration of the speed of the vessels, or of the mail through Egypt, it would be possible to arrange that it should arrive in London not later than Tuesday, while leaving Bombay at 10 A.M. on Friday. The departure on Monday evening during the monsoon was, you observed, accepted in India.

2. On the receipt of your Excellency's letter, I communicated immediately with the General Post Office, and I now forward a copy of their reply, dated the 6th of December, enclosing a letter from the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company. The latest time which the Company are able to recommend, in order to ensure a uniform delivery in London on Tuesday morning, is five in the afternoon on Tuesday during the south-west monsoon, and on Thursday during the remainder of the year.

3. I have accordingly determined, with the concurrence of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, to adopt these dates, and the decision was communicated to Your Excellency in my telegram of the 23rd ultimo.

From the Secretary, General Post Office, London, To the Under-Secretary of State for India, dated, 6th December 1880.

I have laid before the Postmaster-General your letter of the 25th ultimo, covering a copy of a despatch from the Government of India and its enclosures, with reference to the day to be fixed for the departure from Bombay of the weekly mail for this country.

It appears that, in consequence of a despatch addressed by Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India in Council to the Government of India on this subject in August last, the Chambers of Commerce of the three Presidencies have been consulted, with the following results :—

The Chambers of Commerce of Madras and Bombay accept the proposal made by the Marquis of Hartington that the mails should leave Bombay on Thursday evening

in the fair season. But to this the Bengal Chamber of Commerce strongly object, on the ground that it would involve the closing of the mails in Calcutta on Monday evening; and considering the importance of the interests represented by that Chamber, the Government of India think it essential that the mails should not leave Bombay in the fair season before Friday.

The objection to this arrangement is that the mails would not reach London until Wednesday, whereas a Tuesday's arrival is considered absolutely necessary in the interests of commerce of this country.

But the Indian Government point out that this objection would be entirely overcome if the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company could undertake to perform the journey in one day less than their contract time.

It has been further suggested that, should the Company find this acceleration out of their power, they should consider the alternative proposed by the Government of India, in paragraph 6 of their despatch of the 2nd ultimo, as to a Friday *morning* departure from Bombay, with an arrival in London on Tuesday.

The Postmaster-General has communicated on these points with the Peninsular and Oriental Company, and he desires me to enclose for Lord Hartington's information a copy of their reply. It will be seen that they cannot adopt either of the schemes proposed for accelerating the mail service, and consequently there is no alternative but to consider the best day for a departure from Bombay under the existing contract arrangements, having regard

to all the interests concerned, for it is clear that the convenience of all cannot be equally satisfied.

After careful consideration of the whole question, it seems to the Postmaster-General that no better arrangement can be made than for fixing the departure from Bombay on Thursdays and Tuesdays—Thursday during the fair season, and Tuesday during the south-west monsoon.

This will bring the mails into London on Tuesday throughout the year, thus giving ample time for replies on Friday evening to the most distant parts of the United Kingdom.

It appears from the correspondence that Lord Hartington suggested a Monday's departure during the south-west monsoon, but in doing so His Lordship no doubt lost sight of the fact that, under the present contract, only two extra days are allowed for the monsoon voyages, while under the old contract three were taken.

Tuesday is really the day corresponding with Thursday for ensuring a regular arrival in London on a Tuesday.

Considering all the circumstances, Mr. Fawcett recommends Thursday and Tuesday as the best days that can be appointed for the homeward mails to leave Bombay, and if Lord Hartington agrees in this opinion, he hopes that an early decision will be come to, as it is essential that the working Time Tables for the year 1881 should be issued without delay.

From the Secretary to the P. and O. Steam Navigation Company, to the Secretary, General Post Office, London, dated 3rd December 1880.

I have the honor, by order of the Board of Directors, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 26th November (No. 145728 of 1880), with reference to the question of the Time Table for the whole of the Company's Mail Services for the ensuing year.

The Directors have carefully perused the observations put forward in your letter, and also the enclosures (returned herewith) transmitted for their consideration.—

(1.) It appears to the Directors that the object which it is now desired to attain is the arrival in London of the whole of the Eastern Mails on a certain day of the week throughout the year, and that the delivery should take place at a sufficient interval from the departure of the outward mail on Friday, to give the mercantile interests of this country ample time for the correspondence which has to be carried on with the whole of the East.

(2) The Directors are clearly of opinion that the latest day which should be thus fixed for the delivery of the mails in London should be Tuesday morning, and in order that such delivery may, under all ordinary circumstances, be put beyond any doubt or question, they think that it would not be advisable that the mails should leave Bombay later than 5 P.M. on Tuesday during the south-west monsoon, and at the same hour on Thursday during the north-east monsoon.

(3.) It would have afforded the Directors great satisfaction if they could have seen their way to comply

with the suggestion made by the Indian Government in one of the enclosures of your letter, to the effect that the Company should accelerate the speed of their vessels throughout the voyage from Bombay to Brindisi, but they regret to say they are unable to agree to that proposal. The acceleration in question would bring the contract speed up to very nearly 12 knots, and it will be in the recollection of your Department that when the Company sent in their tenders for the Mail Services they asked a sum of 360,000*l.* for a service at the rate of 11 knots between Bombay and Brindisi, and a sum of 400,000*l.* for the acceleration of that service to 12 knots; and it may also be as well to remind the Government of India that the Company's tender for an exceptionally rapid service was lower than that sent in by any of the other competitors for the contract by a sum of no less than 36,000*l.* It may likewise be mentioned that in order to give a speed of 12 knots on every voyage in a contract service, the vessels must be driven practically at a rate of nearly 13 knots, and in giving the contract speed as 11 knots, the ships also require to be driven at a very much higher rate. These circumstances would naturally escape the attention of the Government of India.

(4.) The Directors regret that they are equally unable to admit that the suggestion contained in paragraph 6 of the despatch of the Government of India would, if carried out, fulfil the intention which your Department has in view, *viz.*, that of ensuring beyond doubt the delivery of the mails in London on Tuesday. It will be seen, on perusing carefully the latter part of that paragraph, that the advantages of a departure from Bombay on Friday

morning in place of Friday evening are in reality advocated, whereas the Directors consider it necessary, bearing all conditions, including the transit through Egypt in mind, that the steamers should not leave Bombay later than 5 P.M. on Tuesday or Thursday, according to the season.

5. While the Directors think it right thus to state their views as to the conditions under which the object contemplated by the Post Office can best be attained, I am desired to add that should it, in the interests of Calcutta or Bombay, or any of the other communities concerned, be considered desirable to start the mails on earlier days than Tuesday and Thursday from Bombay, the Directors of course would have no objection, provided they left not later than 5 P.M. If, for example, it should be decided to start the steamers from Bombay on Monday at 5 P.M. during the south-west monsoon, the natural result would be that the mails would be delivered in London on Monday morning at that period of the year, a result of which there would probably be no great objection on the part of this country, while at the same time it would not fulfil exactly the generally expressed desire that the mails should be delivered throughout the year on the same day of the week ; but the departure from Bombay on Monday evening under the existing period of monsoon allowances would have the awkward result of causing four changes during the year in the days of departure from the ports in China, the Straits Settlements, and Australia, an inconvenience which would certainly be loudly complained of in those quarters. If, then, a Monday departure should be fixed on it would be very desirable that the monsoon should commence with the first mail leaving Bombay in May, and

end with the first mail leaving in October, thus bringing the monsoon voyages completely into harmony with the Time Table from China, so that only two changes in the year would require to be made in the China and Australia Time Tables, namely, at the beginning and end of the south-west monsoon, exactly as would be the case in the Indian Time Tables.

Without this alteration the Directors would certainly not recommend the departure from Bombay on Monday evening, as it would be very unpopular in China and Australia; but granting this modification, the correspondence transmitted in your letter would seem to indicate that, while a Monday departure would please India, it would not be unpopular elsewhere.

COPY forwarded to the Director-General of the Post Office of India, to the Governments of Bengal, Bombay, and Madras, and the Chambers of Commerce, Bengal, Bombay, Madras, and Rangoon, for information, in continuation of No, 1759, dated 30th December 1880.

E. J. SINKINSON,

Under-Secretary to the Government of India.

CLOSING OF MAILS AT THE POST-OFFICE.

From Chamber to Director-General of Post-Office.

Calcutta, 31st January 1881.

In discussing with your predecessor the question of expediting the transmission of overland mails from Calcutta with the view to an early morning departure of

the mail steamer from Bombay, the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, on behalf of the members, consented to adopt Mr. Monteath's suggestion to make the closing hour at the Calcutta General Post-office 6 instead of 7 P.M., and to start the train from Howrah at 7 instead of 9 P.M.

This arrangement was subsequently amended to the extent of the train leaving Howrah at 8 o'clock.

But as the object then in view has been abandoned, and which, under recent orders regarding the mail service, are not likely to be modified, the earlier closing of the mails at Calcutta has been rendered unnecessary. I am directed to apply for a later closing hour than at present—7 P. M. or 7-30 P. M., without extra fee, suiting the majority of the commercial community—and the Committee of the Chamber hope it is in your power to meet the general wish, with a corresponding later despatch from Howrah.

From Director-General of Post-Office to Chamber.

No. 11926, *Calcutta, the* 2*nd February* 1881.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 31st January 1881, and in reply to state that I will endeavour to meet the wishes expressed by the Chamber, and arrange for a reversion to the old arrangement under which the mail train left Howrah at 9 P. M., Calcutta time.

From Director-General of Post-Office to Chamber.

Calcutta, 8th February 1881

Referring to the correspondence quoted,—from Chamber 31st January 1881, to Chamber No. 11926, 2nd, February 1881,—would you prefer a departure from Howrah at 10 P. M. to 9 P. M., the hour given in your official letter?

The earlier hour (9 P. M.) would be better on the whole for passengers and others: but if the later hour, (10 P. M.) is of any real benefit to the Calcutta mercantile community, the Government will, I think, try and give them that benefit.

I solicit an expression of your wishes as President of the Chamber.

From Chamber to Director-General of Post-Office.

Calcutta, 9th February 1881.

Your letter to Mr. Crum has, in his absence from Calcutta, been sent to me, and I placed it before the Committee of the Chamber at their meeting to-day, when I was directed to thank you for your reference, and to say that although the later hour of 10. P. M. for starting the train from Howrah would perhaps be a convenience to bankers and merchants whose mail correspondence would require as much time as they can command, yet as you say the earlier hour 9 P. M. would be better on the whole for passengers and others, they will not press for the detention of the train beyond that hour.

At the same time the Committee trust the community will not be deprived of the opportunity of posting letters—without fee—at the Railway Station box up to the moment of the train starting.

From Director-General, Post-Office to Chamber.

Calcutta, 10th February 1881.

In reply to your letter of the 9th February, I shall at once communicate with the Government in view to a return to the old arrangement, under which the mail train left Howrah at 9 P. M., Calcutta time.

As regards your final paragraph, I would point out that *foreign letters* can now be posted without extra fee at the Railway station letter box up to 5 minutes before the departure of the train. But this box is closed to ordinary letters half an hour before the train starts. Ordinary letters posted within this half hour are charged with a a late letter fee of two annas.

This arrangement will continue under the revised time table under contemplation.

When the Railway station letter box was open up to the last moment for the reception of inland letters, the inhabitants of the Burra Bazar used to bring in 1000 vernacular letters at a time which required a translation of the address in English. Hence the need for the late letter fee. Since its introduction, vernacular letters are always posted in time.

You have not distinctly asked me to abolish the late letter fee: but I think it well to explain to you the

circumstances which led to its imposition and which demand its retention.

SMALL CAUSE COURT BILL.

In calling attention to the following correspondence, the Committee have to express their profound regret that their first remonstrance against the proposed Bill, though supported by the mercantile and trading community and by the practitioners of the Court, and fully endorsed by His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, was of so little avail. The Committee have forwarded a second protest, and trust that the Bill as amended by the Select Committee will yet be abandoned. So strongly do they object to the proposed legislation, that they have not hesitated to declare that they had rather relinquish their long-cherished hope of getting the pecuniary jurisdiction of the Court extended, than accept a measure which would revolutionise the Court and promote delay, expense, and uncertainty in commercial suits.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.—No 4393, *dated Calcutta, the* 28*th September* 1880.

I am directed to forward a copy of the Bill and of its annexure noted on the margin, and to request that you will favour the Lieutenant-Governor with the opinion of the Chamber upon the provisions of the Bill.

1. A Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the Courts of Small Causes established in the Presidency towns.
2. Statement of Objects and Reasons.

2. The Lieutenant-Governor trusts to receive your reply by the 25th October next.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 2nd October 1880.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 4393 of the 28th ultimo, forwarding copy of a Bill to amend the law relating to Courts of Small Causes, and requesting an expression of the Chamber's opinion on its provisions, which the Lieutenant-Governor hopes may be communicated by the 25th instant.

Under the Committee's instruction I am to state that their careful attention will be given to the proposed measure, but considering it has reached them just before the long vacation, when they are particularly occupied with other very pressing engagements, they must request an extension of time for reply, which they hope to send as soon as they can after business is resumed.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 27th November 1880.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 4393 of the 28th September last, addressed to the President, forwarding copy of the Bill and its annexure noted in the margin, and requesting the opinion of the Chamber on the provisions of the Bill.

1. A Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the Courts of Small Causes established in the Presidency towns.
2. Statement of Objects and Reasons.

The Committee have given this most important matter their best consideration, and desire me to submit the following remarks in reference thereto :—

In the Statement of Objects and Reasons it is said that the most important change introduced is that which provides for the extension of pecuniary jurisdiction to amounts not exceeding Rs. 2,000. This extension the Committee entirely approve of, and they believe it will be found of great benefit to the mercantile and trading classes generally.

The Bill can only, however, prove beneficial so long as the character of the Small Cause Courts is in no material way altered, and the Committee would strongly deprecate any change which would, in the smallest degree, tend to disturb the object for which the Courts were established, *viz.*, the speedy recovery of contract debts.

The mercantile community desire to have in the Small Cause Courts an inexpensive, early, and final settlement of

their claims and disputes, and up to this time the procedure now in force has answered the end in view, and has been found, on the whole, to work satisfactorily.

It seems to the Committee that Clause 21 and Schedule 2 extending some 500 sections of the Civil Procedure Code ("so far as they are applicable") to the Small Cause Courts, must tend greatly to increase the work and to lengthen the proceedings; and although this is a legal question which it does not come within the province of the Chamber to discuss, the Committee cannot but express their opinion that it would be better to incorporate in the Bill itself such procedure as is deemed necessary.

The Committee are not in favor of a regular appeal to the High Court being allowed on the occasion of the proposed extension of the pecuniary limit of jurisdiction, believing that such permission would tend to alter the character of the Court of Small Causes by necessitating the taking of more formal and lengthy notes of evidence, &c., than is now, they understand, the practice.

They think, however, that the opportunity might be taken advantage of to strengthen, and in some degree alter, the present constitution of the New Trial Bench. It seems to them that no Appeal Court should consist of an even number of judges, and that each such Bench should consist of at least three judges. If this be not practicable in all cases it should, at least, be the rule in the extended business.

The Committee do not approve of jurisdiction being given in suits for the recovery of immovable property.

The Committee quite appreciate the difficulties which would have attended giving the Small Cause Court itself power to issue execution against immovable property, and therefore pass over without comment the provision of the Bill on that score; but they presume that the procedure of the Court will provide facilities to decree-holders in connection with the recovery of decrees against persons who are able practically to avoid arrest by simply removing themselves from the local jurisdiction of the Court.

They understand that the sections which it is proposed to extend to this Bill will allow of execution of decrees of the Small Cause Court in the suburbs; this they consider of great importance, but they would also like to see power given to the Court to attach property pending the decision of a case. It is a common practice for persons in this country when sued in Court, to make away with their property at once, so that by the time a decision is obtained there is no means of recovering the money.

It is not clear to the Committee why suits to obtain an injunction should be excluded from the jurisdiction, it being of course understood that no damages beyond Rs. 2,000 could be recovered in such suits. The Committee earnestly request the attention of Government to this point.

Section 27 of the Bill should, they think, give power to award compensation to a defendant when the plaintiff has failed to recover more than the amount admitted by the defendant. This would prevent the practice of persons suing for more than they believe to be due to them.

The insolvency jurisdiction only affects a class with whom the mercantile body is very rarely brought in contact, but the Committee cannot refrain from expressing a hope that now Government has begun to deal with the insolvency question it will not rest until it has given the trading public a code more adapted to their wants than the existing law.

The Committee would be glad if the Government could see their way to extending the testamentary and intestate jurisdiction to Rs. 2,000 ; and, in any case, they submit that the words in section 42, " without deducting debts owing by him," should be followed by the words " other than debts secured by the mortgage of immovable property or the actual pledge of movable property."

According to the present reading of Clause 47 the fee on Rs. 500 would be Rs. 62-8, whilst the fee on Rs. 501 would only be Rs. 31-5. The Committee consider the charges high, but having regard to the circumstance that reduction might tend to encourage frivolous litigation they do not press the matter.

Witnesses should, the Committee think, be paid on some such scale as in the High Court, but, considering the class of cases which often come before the Small Cause Courts, this might be left in the hands of the Court for settlement at the time evidence is being taken. The Committee are informed that subpœnas have to be renewed every day according to the present practice, and they would therefore suggest that, if this be the case, the new Act should provide for their continuing good till the end of the case, as in the High Court.

The Committee notice with regret that the Bill proposes to withhold jurisdiction from the Small Cause Courts as regards suits against the Secretary of State in Council, for they consider that the mercantile and trading community will be placed at a serious disadvantage if they have to carry to the High Court disputed claims under the proposed extended limit of Rupees 2,000. The Small Cause Courts already possess the power to entertain such suits, and the Committee are not aware of any sufficient grounds why the Courts' jurisdiction in this respect should be withheld.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.

No. 1305 *J., Dated Calcutta, the* 24*th March* 1881.

I am directed to forward herewith a copy of the Bill and of its annexure noted on the margin, and to request that you will favor the Lieutenant-Governor with the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce upon the provisions of the Bill.

1. Bill (No. II.) to consolidate and amend the law relating to the Courts of Small Causes established in the Presidence Towns.
2. Report of Select Committee on the above Bill.

2. The Lieutenant-Governor will be glad to have your reply before the 15th June next.

From Chamber to the Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 30*th April* 1881.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1305, dated the 24th March 1881, giving cover to the Report

of the Select Committee on the Bill to Consolidate and Amend the Law relating to the Courts of Small Causes established in the Presidency towns, and requesting the opinion of the Chamber on the provisions of the Bill as now amended.

The Committee have again given the Bill their careful consideration, and, before touching upon the various clauses which seem to them to call for remark, desire me to say that, whilst acknowledging some improvements to have been made, they are greatly disappointed to find that very little has been done to remove the main objections which they and others found to the former Bill, *viz.*, that if carried into effect, the result would be to completely change the character of the Courts of Small Causes and to impair their usefulness and popularity.

It cannot be too often repeated that the mercantile community desire to have in the Small Cause Courts an inexpensive, early, and final settlement of claims and disputes, and that any changes which may have the effect of increasing the expense, of lengthening the proceedings, or of encouraging further litigation in the higher Courts when the losing party is not satisfied with the decision, must meet with their strong disapproval. With these general observations, I will now proceed to report on such of the various clauses of the Bill as appear to the Committee to be of importance, and of such a nature as to call for comment from them as representatives of the mercantile community.

Section 7.—The Committee do not see the necessity for, nor the desirability of, the change which has been

introduced, in so far as it provides that not less than one-third of the Judges, including the Chief Judge, shall be *advocates of one of the High Courts.* They think it a very proper provision that such a proportion of Judges as has been named should have had a training as barristers, but they see no reason why the selection should be limited to those who have qualified as advocates of the High Courts, which would place the appointments beyond the reach of any able men who did not happen to practise in this country, whilst it would leave as eligible any barrister of the High Court whatever his qualifications might be, and it is extremely improbable that successful advocates of the High Court would accept such appointments in the Small Cause Courts. The Committee understand that the barrister Judges of the High Courts are not necessarily advocates of these Courts, and they can see no reason why a rule which has been found unnecessary for the one should be made applicable to the other. The same remarks apply to the appointment of the Chief Judge, whose best training for the important office ought to be in the Court itself, and the Committee think that this appointment, with the proviso that it should be held by a barrister, might safely be left in the hands of the local Government.

Sections 13 *and* 14,—providing for a Registrar and giving him power to try petty suits, are approved of; and considering the number of such cases, which at present occupy the time of the Judges, the Committee suggest whether it might not be desirable to give the local Government power to appoint an additional or sub-registrar in order further to lighten the more important work of the Court.

Section 23.—In their previous letter the Committee stated that in their judgment the introduction of a number of chapters and sections of the Civil Procedure Code must have the effect of greatly increasing and lengthening the proceedings, and they expressed the opinion that it would be better to incorporate in the Bill itself such sections of the Code as were deemed necessary. Since then they understand that other public bodies, the Judges of the Small Cause Court, and the Lieutenant-Governor himself, have expressed similar views; and such being the case, it is greatly to be regretted that the Select Committee have not seen their way to make any such important modifications as would have removed the fears and objections so generally expressed.

The whole procedure required, with the necessary modifications, should, the Committee think, be embodied in the Act itself, which would in every respect be more convenient than the plan proposed; and they submit that the greatest care should be taken to avoid introducing what may in any way tend to lengthen the proceedings.

Section 24.—The Select Committee in regard to this say that it will no doubt leave open the way to persistent parties to litigate a second time questions which may have been already carefully considered and well decided, but that this evil is preferable to running the risk of having important and complicated issues finally decided perhaps on the merits of some small petty case, in itself of no importance. The Committee are of opinion that it will be a great mistake to leave all decisions of the Small Cause Court open to revision as practically might, it seems, be the effect of this section, and they would hope

that a way of meeting the difficulty, suggested, might be found without causing such a very serious result as has been noticed by the Select Committee.

Section 40.—In their previous letter the Committee expressed objection to any regular appeal to the High Court being allowed. Under the new provision, the objections that such an appeal would involve loss of time in the taking of notes of evidence, &c., have certainly been overcome, but the Committee believe they express the general feeling of the mercantile classes in saying that it is not desirable that any regular appeals to the High Court should be allowed, and they would support the views of the Lieutenant-Governor on this subject.

Section 72.—The Committee are at a loss to understand the reasons which have guided the Select Committee in drawing up a section intended to prevent Pleaders in the future from acting in the Small Cause Courts, and at once to exclude all but Advocates and Vakils of the High Court from appearing to conduct cases coming under the extended jurisdiction.

Hitherto the mercantile community have been well satisfied to have their cases conducted by many of those Pleaders whom this provision is intended to exclude, and the advantages which under it will be done away with are of so important a nature, that the Committee must very strongly urge that this clause be reconsidered. These at present are, that suits are conducted by a class of intelligent men well experienced in the practice of the Court, and who are willing to do the work on much more moderate terms than the practitioners to whom it is now intended to give a monopoly.

The advantages to those who cannot afford heavy costs of being able to employ the present class of Pleaders are obvious, and they are equally apparent in the case of the mercantile community generally, who will object to be forced to incur, in Small Cause Court cases, heavier costs than have hitherto been necessary. The Committee fail to see why people should be restricted in the choice of their law agents; and they are not aware of any complaints which can be brought against the Small Cause Court Pleaders as a class which can justify their exclusion. On the contrary, they understand the general opinion to be that very many have proved themselves well fitted to conduct the great bulk of the cases which are tried, and they feel that to exclude them in the future will be a very grave mistake.

The Lieutenant-Governor, referring to the remarks of the Chamber of Commerce, expressed the opinion that the limit of Rs. 2,000 should be applied to the testamentary and intestate jurisdiction of the Small Cause Court, but this has not been conceded.

Nor have the Select Committee expressed any opinion upon the Chamber's suggestions, that witnesses should be paid on such a scale of compensation for attendance as the Court might see fit, and that subpœnas should hold good till the final settlement of a case, instead of being renewed day by day whilst the trial lasts. These are not unimportant points in connection with suits in the Small Cause Court, and the Committee trust His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor will concur in their opinion regarding them.

In conclusion, I am directed to say that the whole tendency, by many of the changes introduced, seems to the Committee to be to alter the character of the Courts of Small Causes: and although in no way withdrawing their approval of the extension of pecuniary jurisdiction, they would far rather dispense with that extension if it is to result in the Courts being no longer tribunals whose main object is to settle in a speedy, cheap, effectual, and final manner, contract claims, or actions to recover mercantile and trade debts, generally involving questions of fact and not of abstruse points of law,

THE SMALL CAUSE COURT: DELAY IN THE DISPOSAL OF SUITS.

The Committee trust that their representation regarding the delay which attends the disposal of suits will have the effect desired. The case referred to in the following correspondence appeared to the Committee to justify its submission to the Government of Bengal; and it is hoped that the additional judicial strength applied for by the Chamber, and which His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor has promised to take into consideration, will be sufficient to enable the Court to meet the largest demands upon its time and attention.

From Chamber to the Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 10th December 1880.

In communicating the opinion of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce on the provisions of the Bill to amend the law relating to Courts of Small Causes, it was stated in my letter of the 27th ultimo that the procedure now in force had answered the end in view, *viz.*, an early, inexpensive and final settlement of claims and disputes, and that it had been found to work satisfactorily on the whole. But the information which has lately reached the Committee induces them to qualify, to some extent, the above expression of general approval of the present practice, and to submit for the consideration of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, that there have been frequent instances of delay, involving much loss of time and additional costs to the parties concerned.

A recent case has been specially brought to the Committee's notice, which points to the necessity of at once strengthening the present Bench by the appointment of an additional Judge, or by the temporary employment of one or more Barristers, in order to dispose of suits that have been filed already, and thereby expedite the despatch of public business.

The net receipts of the Court appear to be amply sufficient to meet any additional charge in this respect.

The case to which the Committee refer was published in the papers of the 3rd instant—that of Messrs. Mackenzie, Lyall & Co. *versus* Messrs. Mackinnon, Mackenzie & Co.

A suit for damages was instituted on the 2nd of August last, but it was placed so low down in the Cause List that there was time only to take partial evidence, and the further hearing was postponed for 4 months, which appears to be a considerable adjournment of a suit entered for summary procedure.

On the expiry of that period, and on the case being called up, the non-attendance of a material witness led to further delay, and the case was again adjourned for 2 months, the plaintiffs being made to pay the subpœna costs of the other side.

The reasons for these long consecutive postponements are, of course, unknown to the Committee, but it appears to them that if the Judge in whose hands the disposal of such cases rests, has not the leisure to attend to them by reason of his time being pre-occupied with other references some remedy should be promptly applied for the purpose of expediting the work of the Court, and terminating with all possible despatch the litigation which the judicial process of the Small Cause Court is intended to bring to speedy conclusion.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.

No. 583 *J, dated Calcutta, the 7th February* 1881.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 10th December, bringing to notice the delay in the disposal of the suit for damages instituted by Messrs. Mackenzie, Lyall & Co. against Messrs. Mackinnon, Mackenzie & Co. in the Calcutta Court of Small Causes.

2. In reply I am to forward, for the information of the Chamber of Commerce, the accompanying extract paras. 2 to 8 from a letter No. 9, dated the 17th January, from the First Judge of the Court.

Extract from a letter from H. Millett, Esquire, First Judge, Calcutta Court of Small Causes, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Judicial, Political and Appointment Departments, Fort William, 17th January 1881, *No.* 9.

Para 2. The suit referred to in the letter of the Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce was instituted on the 26th July 1880, and the returnable date of the summons, *i.e.* the day on which the suit would first come on for hearing, was the 2nd August 1880.

3. If was brought by Mackenzie, Lyall & Co. against Mackinnon, Mackenzie & Co. (presumably as Agents for the British India Steam Navigation Company) to recover Rs. 895-1-0 as damages by reason of the failure of the defendants to deliver certain cases of Beer and Champagne in good order and condition from the S. S. "Chybassa." The main issue is this:—The plaintiffs say the cases were delivered to the steamer in London in good order and condition, but that on opening them in Calcutta they were found to be damaged by water, the result being that the damp straw damaged the contents of the bottles. The defendants say that it is impossible that the straw could have got damp while under their charge, but that the bottles must ordinarily have been packed in damp straw.

4. The suit was down on the list in due course on the 2nd August 1880. I admit that I should not have had time to hear the case that day, unless I had heard it out of its turn, but it was stated to me when the case was called, on that it was necessary to examine the Captain and Mate of the "Chybassa" immediately as the steamer was going away in a day or two, and it was not known for certain whether they would ever be in Calcutta again. Accordingly, I stated I would take the evidence of these two witnesses the next day (August 3rd) under Section 192 of the Code of Civil Procedure. At the same time it was also stated to me that under no circumstances could the case proceed, as Captain Brown, a well-known Marine Surveyor, was a material witness on the part of the defendants; and that he was in England and expected back sometime in November. I find, on reference to my notes of the 2nd August, that I was engaged the whole day in a long case between two natives, which was not finished till a quarter to seven in the evening, and I now recollect sitting to this late hour in order that the case might not remain part-heard and interfere in any way with the examination of the two witnesses the next day.

5. On the 3rd August the two witnesses in the case of Mackenzie, Lyall & Co. and Mackinnon, Mackenzie & Co. were examined, their evidence lasting till 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The case was then adjourned to the 3rd December, and it was adjourned for this length of time, not because I had not time to hear it, but because it was necessary that Captain Brown should be in Calcutta before it could be proceeded with. Had I adjourned it merely because I had not time to hear it, I should have adjourned it, so far as I can judge now to about the 13th September.

6. On the 3rd December the case again came on. On this day it was first on the list and would have taken precedence of all other cases, and so far as I was concerned there was nothing to prevent it being heard. It then appeared that a material witness on the part of the plaintiffs was absent, and that his absence was caused by no fault either on his part or on the part of the plaintiffs. I then suggested that the case should be proceeded with, and that this witness should be examined subsequently, but the attorney of the defendants objected to this course, and as it is not proper that any party to a suit (except under very exceptional circumstances) should be forced to proceed with a case piece-meal, I was again obliged to adjourn it. It was then adjourned to the 4th February 1881. This adjournment was rather longer than would have been the case under ordinary circumstances, but the period was made a little longer, because the pleader of the plaintiffs was desirous of examining Mr. Brock, a partner in the plaintiffs' firm, who was in England at the time and expected back some time in January. Perhaps it is necessary to state that in the meantime Captain Brown had died in England, so that the defendants will now be obliged to do without his evidence, but that could not then (3rd August) have been foreseen.

7. From the above state of facts it will be seen that the adjournments have been made chiefly to suit the convenience of parties, and had it not been so, the case would probably long ago have been disposed of.

8. I desire also to refer to a passage in the fifth paragraph of the letter of the Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce: He says—"A suit for damages was institu-

ted on the 2nd August last, but it was placed so low down in the list that there was time only to take partial evidence." I do not understand the force of the remark. It seems to imply that it was improper to place it where it happened to be. Why, it is difficult to understand. Cases are placed in the list in their proper turn, the older cases being placed first. Nor is it correct that this case was low down in the list. There were eight summons cases on my list that day, and this case was the fourth of the eight.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 26th February 1881.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 583 of the 7th instant, forwarding extracts from a letter from the First Judge of the Court of Small Causes in the matter of the Committee's representation of 10th December last.

As that representation was based mainly on information furnished by Messrs. Mackenzie, Lyall and Co., the plaintiffs in the suit referred to, the Committee forwarded Mr. Millett's explanation to those gentlemen, a copy of whose letter on the subject is herewith sent.

In placing this matter before you, the Committee of the Chamber take the opportunity of again submitting for the consideration of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor that, in their opinion, the number of Judges of the Small Cause Court is inadequate to the amount of work which

comes before them, and that the judicial staff should be strengthened so as to render the Court equal, at all times, to the demand for prompt disposal of public business, and to provide ample means for meeting a growing increase in litigation.

The Committee believe that the annual receipts of the Court are considerably in excess of expenditure; and the large annual surplus would readily admit of the required addition to the Bench, and thereby promote a more satisfactory disposal of the heavy work which apparently overtaxes the strength of the present constitution of the Court, and which will be still heavier when the proposed enlargement of the Court's pecuniary jurisdiction is sanctioned, and the necessity for increasing its strength will be inevitable.

From Mackenzie, Lyall and Co. to Chamber

Calcutta, 18th February 1881.

We have to thank you for forwarding for our perusal a letter from the Under-Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Judicial Department, accompanied by extract paragraphs 2 to 8 from a letter No. 9, dated 17th January, from the First Judge of the Small Cause Court. As some of the statements in the latter we cannot allow to pass unnoticed, we trust the Committee will pardon our further troubling it. We may pass over paragraphs Nos. 2 and 3 of Mr. Millett's letter, and take up Nos. 4 and 5, which would seem to imply that the case could not have proceeded on the 2nd August, even had the Court had time to hear it: this is an error, as we were quite pre-

pared to proceed without the evidence of Captain Brown (valuable as that evidence would have been to our case), and it was only on a postponement having to be made, and that for some lengthy period, that we submitted that the matter might, with justice to all concerned, stand over a little longer, until Captain Brown's expected return.

Paragraph 6 deals with the case when called on for hearing on the 3rd December; on this occasion we maintain we were quite willing to proceed: we had served Mr. Pedler with a subpœna in the usual course, and his exemption or otherwise from attendance was at the discretion of the learned First Judge; this being so, we considered it a great hardship to postpone the case for a period of 2 months, and the learned Judge was quite under a misapprehension that the period was made longer because the plainitiffs' pleader was anxious to examine Mr. Brock who was in England at the time, as Mr. B. knew nothing of the circumstances of the case, and, as will be seen when the case was eventually heard, did not attend the Court, nor was his name mentioned in any way in connection with the adjournment.

We regret that the learned First Judge should have misconstrued our remarks on the position of our case on the list on the 2nd of August. We had no intention to inpute irregularity to any officer of the Court: but wished to point out the great inconvenience and expense to the mercantile community arising from the cases on one Judge's list being frequently more numerous than can be heard on one day, and whether some remedy could not be devised, as apparently the earliest postponements delay a case from a month to six weeks. We cannot conclude

without tendering to the Committee of the Chamber our best acknowledgments for its kind and valuable assistance.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.

No. 1009 *J, dated Calcutta, the 5th March* 1881.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 26th ultimo, and in reply to state for the information of the Chamber of Commerce, that the question of increasing the strength of the Calcutta Court of Small Causes will be taken into consideration by the Lieutenant-Governor when the Presidency Small Cause Courts Act is amended.

GENERAL STEAM SURVEY ACT.

This subject having been referred to the Committee for an expression of their views, the following correspondence will inform members of the circumstances which have led to the proposed measure, and the opinions regarding it recorded by Government and by the Committee :—

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 12th May 1881.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have given their careful attention to your letter No. 396,

dated 12th March, regarding the enactment of a General Steam Survey Act for all British India which should repeal all existing local Acts.

They consider such an Act distinctly desirable, and are of opinion that it should follow as closely as possible the English law on the subject, with this exception—that all steam vessels, whether passenger or cargo, trading in Indian waters, should be required to hold certificates.

The Committee suggest this exception because there are in fact scarcely any, if any, steamers engaged in the coasting or inland trade which do not carry deck passengers, and it is therefore not worth while, even if desirable, to break the uniformity of the Act by drawing distinctions between cargo and other steam vessels.

The Committee regret to differ from His Honor as regards the necessity for biennial surveys. They are not aware of any circumstances here, such as would induce a prudent owner to run the risk of allowing his vessel to fall into bad order; and they venture to question whether the Lieutenant-Governor altogether appreciates the facilities for repair which now exist at the principal Indian Ports, particularly at Calcutta and Bombay.

They think therefore that no public danger would result from following the English Act and restricting formal surveys to an annual visitation. It would of course be necessary for the Government to retain the power of ordering special inspection at any time of any steam vessel, and the Inspectors should also be invested with discretion, in cases of need, to grant certificates, not

for the full period of twelve months, but for such shorter period as they may consider warranted by the condition of the vessel and her machinery.

The Committee cannot recommend any exceptional legislation as regards river vessels and tugs trading out of the Presidency towns. Owners of tugs under existing circumstances find it difficult to cover expenses, and complain much of the loss inflicted on them by having to lay up so frequently for inspection. This is no reason for relaxing necessary vigilance on the part of Government, but it is a reason for considering how far the present restrictions are really necessary: and the Committee submit that public safety would be sufficiently protected by the procedure advocated in the preceding paragraph.

On the other hand special provision may be called for to meet the case of ferry-boats and of other steam vessels, plying inland, or in places removed from efficient inspection.

With reference to vessels holding certificates from the Board of Trade, or of any British Colony, the Committee think that such ships should not be required to obtain an Indian certificate, unless they should engage in the coasting trade or carry deck passengers. And the Committee would suggest that a vessel might be deemed to be engaged in the coasting trade in case of her making more than one voyage between Indian Ports.

In conclusion I am directed to hand you a copy of letter addressed to the Chamber by Messrs. Apcar and Co. and other owners of tug steamers.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.

Marine No. 396,—*Calcutta, the* 12*th March* 1881.

In forwarding, for an expression of the views of the Chamber of Commerce, a copy of the correspondence noted on the margin, regarding the enactment of a general Steam Vessel Survey Act for all British India, I am directed to communicate the following remarks and observations by the Lieutenant-Governor.

Letter from the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department, No. 231, dated the 22nd January 1881, and enclosures.

2. Under Act V (B.C.) of 1862, as amended by Act I of 1868, "*all* steam vessels plying on any of the rivers or waters within the provinces subject to the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, *except* steam vessels which may ply between some port within the said provinces and some port *not* in British India," are liable to be surveyed twice in every year, and no clearance is granted to a vessel not possessed of a certificate and declaration by the surveyors appointed under the Act. Under section 7, the Lieutenant-Governor can give special directions for the survey of *any* British steamer plying between any port of survey in Bengal, and any port or ports whatever. Executive orders were, however, issued in 1874,* prohibiting the survey of vessels holding unexpired certificates from the Board of Trade or from other local Governments, in the absence of good and special grounds for re-survey, in which case the orders of the Lieutenant-Governor were to be obtained. It will thus appear that the Bengal Acts do not affect vessels plying between these

* Forwarded to the Chamber under cover of this office letter No. 2452 of 28th July 1874.

provinces and the United Kingdom, or any port out of India, unless special grounds urgently calling for survey are known to exist.

3. In Bombay, on the other hand, the following classes of vessels are surveyed under Bombay Act II of 1864, as amended by Act IV of 1873:—

(1) *Every* steam vessel plying on Bombay rivers and waters.

(2) Every steam vessel *carrying passengers* between Bombay ports and *any other port*.

But no vessel holding a certificate from the Board of Trade, or any British Indian or Colonial Government, is liable to survey while such certificate remains in force, unless the vessel or its machinery is known to have been injured since the issue of the certificate. It would seem then (and the correspondence now forwarded by the Government of India furnishes a case in point) that in Bombay any steamer carrying passengers to or from the United Kingdom, or any foreign port, is liable to survey if she has no Board of Trade certificate. Cargo steamers so plying are not liable to survey.

4. Under the English law, cargo steamers are not liable to survey at all, and any steamer may carry passengers not exceeding 12 in number without a certificate. Surveys, moreover, of passenger steamers only take place once a year.

5. It is now proposed by the Government of India that the law regarding the survey of sea-going steamers

in India should be made to correspond with the English law, save where there is some special reason for divergence, either by passing a general Survey Act for all India, or by so assimilating the local Acts to the English law as to secure their uniformity *inter se*. It is remarked that in any case the law ought only to apply to passenger steamers, and should embody the exemption in respect of steamers carrying less than 12 passengers. Attention is, at the same time, invited to the question, whether the proposed legislation should embrace inland as well as sea-going steamers, or should be confined to the latter class only, the former being provided for by separate legislation. It is suggested that as inland steamers may pass through different provinces in the course of a voyage, their survey might be regulated by an Act of the Supreme Council, matters of detail being settled by rules made under the orders of the local Governments.

6. The Lieutenant-Governor observes that, as far as Bengal is concerned, the legislation proposed in the case of sea-going steamers plying to ports out of India will make no change, as such steamers, whether carrying passengers or cargo, are not now surveyed without special grounds, while no survey is made of steamers plying to other ports in India during the currency of certificates granted by other local Governments. But the proposal to exempt from survey sea-going cargo steamers, tugs, and all vessels not carrying passengers, which ply between Bengal and Indian ports, is one which calls for serious consideration. In England the Board of Trade has power under section 14 of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1854,

to appoint an Inspector to report on the condition and sufficiency of the hull and machinery of any steam-ship. Repairs are easily executed at home ports and, in the interest of owners, it is probably cheaper to keep vessels in good order than to run risks. In India the case is different. Here protection is as necessary for crews as it is at home for passengers—protection against the ignorance, carelessness, and thrift of native or other owners. They require indeed to be protected also against themselves. (The worst explosions that have occurred here have taken place on board river tugs.) When Act V (B.C.) of 1862 was passed, the protection of cargo was put forward as strongly as that of passengers. The Lieutenant-Governor is disposed to hold therefore that, as regards sea-going local steamers, the principle of the Bengal Acts should be followed; but that there should be no interference with steamers visiting Indian ports from English or Foreign ports so long as they hold certificates, or are of a class exempted from survey by the Regulations of the Board of Trade, or by the English Merchant Shipping Acts, unless there is ground for believing that damage has been received on the voyage out, and that a special survey, under Government orders, is necessary. If this view were adopted, the Lieutenant-Governor would also adhere to the principle of the Bengal Acts in having surveys made once in every six months, recognizing, however, certificates granted by other local Governments.

7. As regards the survey of inland steam vessels, the Bengal Acts do not seem to call for any amendment. It is better that the surveys of vessels plying both on Bengal and Assam waters should take place where good surveyors

are available, than in remote districts where there are no surveyors and no appliances for survey.

No. 397.

COPY, with copy of enclosures, forwarded to the Port Commissioners, with a request that they will favour the Lieutenant-Governor with their views on the question referred by the Government of India.

No. 398.

COPY, with copy of enclosures, forwarded to the Port Officer, with a request that he will be good enough to express his opinion on the question referred by the Government of India.

By order of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal,

C. S. BAYLEY,

Offg. Under-Secy to the Govt. of Bengal.

CALCUTTA,

The 12th March 1881.

From S. JACOB, ESQ., *Assistant Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Finance and Commerce, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department,—No.* 231, *dated Fort William, the 22nd January* 1881.

I am directed to forward, for consideration and report, the accompanying papers containing a suggestion by the Government of Bombay that a general Steam Vessel Survey Act should be passed for all British India.

2. The local Acts* on the subject do not follow the English law, and in some matters appear to be in direct conflict with that law. They also on many points, without any apparent reason, differ from one another; and surveys effected in one province are not generally recognized in another.

* Bombay Act II of 1864 amended by Bombay Act IV of 1873.
Bengal Act V of 1862 as amended by Bengal Act I of 1868.
India Act XVI of 1871 for the survey of steamers in Burmah.

3. It appears to the Governor-General in-Council that the Indian law, as regards the survey of sea-going steamers, should follow, as closely as possible, the English law on the subject, and should, save where there is some special reason for divergence, be uniform for the whole of British India. Further, it seems necessary, whether a general Act be passed or not, that the Indian law should be amended, so that it shall not conflict with the English law, in order that it may apply only to passenger steamers, and to provide an exemption similar to that granted by section 16 of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1876 (39 and 40 Vic., cap. 80) in cases where that section does not of its own force apply.

4. The Governor-General in Council is therefore disposed to favour the proposal of the Government of Bombay; but, before taking further steps, desires to be favoured with the opinion of the Government of Bengal on the point.

5. A point which demands special consideration in connection with the general question is, whether the proposed legislation should be confined to sea-going steamers, or whether it should apply also to steamers confined

to inland lines of navigation, and in this case whether inland steamers should not be separately provided for. As steamers of the latter kind may pass through different provinces in the course of a voyage, the Governor-General in Council is disposed to think that it would probably be convenient that their survey should be regulated by an Act of the Supreme Council; but as it can scarcely be necessary to exercise so strict a control in their case, as in the case of sea-going steamers, and as moreover the conditions under which they ply must vary more than in the case of sea-going steamers, His Excellency in Council considers that it would be desirable to provide for them in more general terms, leaving the details to be settled by rules made by the local Executive Governments. An expression of opinion on this question is also requested.

COPY of the foregoing letter forwarded to the Government of Bombay for information, and for report in respect of paragraph 5.

Enclosures.

Despatch from the Secretary of State to the Government of Bombay, No. 26 (Statistics and Commerce), dated the 10th June 1880.

Resolution of the Government of Bombay, No. 535, dated 13th September 1880, and enclosures.

From Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, to his Excellency the Right Hon'ble the Governor in Council, Bombay,—No. 26 (Statistics & Commerce), dated 10th June 1880.

I forward, herewith, a copy of a letter and original enclosure from Messrs. Adamson and Short, of South Shields, complaining of a survey having been held at Kurrachee on their S. S. the *Algitha* under circumstances explained in their letter. If the facts are correctly stated, it seems doubtful whether the Bombay Steam Vessel Survey Amendment Act IV of 1873 authorizes the making of the survey, and whether therefore the fee levied ought not to be returned to the ship by the surveyors.

2. I request, therefore, that you will return the enclosed voucher with your opinion on the matter, to enable me to reply to Messrs. Adamson and Short.

Resolution by the Government of Bombay, Marine Department,—No. 535, dated 13th September 1880.

Read—

Memorandum from the General Department, No. 1896, dated 5th July 1880, transferring, for disposal, a letter from Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for India, No. 26, dated 10th June 1880, forwarding, for an expression of the opinion of Government, copy of a letter and original enclosure from Messrs. Adamson and Short, of South Shields, complaining of a survey having been held at Kurrachee on the S. S. *Algitha* under circumstances explained in their letter.

Memorandum from the Commissioner in Sind, No. 1030, dated 24th July 1880, forwarding an explanation from the Master Attendant, Kurrachee, on the subject.

Letter from the Solicitor to Government, No. 1133, dated 7th August 1880.

Memorandum to the Solicitor to Government, No. 364M, dated 17th August 1880.

Memorandum from the Solicitor to Government, No. 1224, dated 26th August 1880, forwarding a copy of the opinion of the Hon'ble Mr. Latham, Advocate-General, on the subject.

Report by the Port Officer, Bombay, No. 1983, dated 31st August 1880.

Letter from J. E. O'Conor, Esq., Assistant Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Finance and Commerce, No. 1709, dated 9th July 1880, requesting to be furnished with a copy of the enclosures to the Secretary of State's Despatch No. 26, dated 10th June 1880.

Letter to the Government of India, No. 142, dated 17th July 1880.

A copy of the several reports above quoted from the Commissioner in Sind, the Solicitor to Government, and the Port Officer, to be forwarded to the Secretary of State with an intimation that, according to the existing law, the levy of the survey fee at Kurrachee was authorized and imperative.

2. The Secretary of State should at the same time be informed that, concurring in the opinions expressed by both the Advocate-General and the Port Officer of the advisability of amending the law in conformity with the Merchant Shipping Amendment Act of 1876, the suggestion of the latter officer that "one Steam Vessel Survey Act for all India" be passed will be submitted for the consideration of the Government of India.

3. A copy of the papers should also be forwarded to the Government of India for consideration of the point indicated; and if it should be decided not to adopt the suggestion, His Excellency the Governor in Council will then consider the alternative measure of repealing Bombay Acts II of 1864 and IV of 1873, and framing an entirely new one for this Presidency.

SUBMITTED (with a copy of the papers) to the Government of India for consideration of the point indicated in paragraph 2 of the foregoing Resolution, with reference to Assistant Secretary Mr. O'Conor's letter above quoted.

Memorandum by H. N. B. Erskine, Esq., Commissioner in Sind. No. 1039, *dated* 24*th July* 1880.

Forwarded under Government endorsement No. 2388, dated 8th July 1880, regarding survey fees on the S. S. *Algitha.*

In reply to the reference from Government on the subject of this correspondence, the Commissioner in Sind has the honor to attach a letter from the Master Attendant, Kurrachee, and to report as follows:—

(1.)—By section 5 of Bombay Act IV of 1873, it is the duty of the surveyor, who in this case is the Master Attendant, to go on board any steam-vessel arriving in port, and to ascertain whether there are any passengers on board, and if so, whether a certificate has been granted by the British Board of Trade, &c.

(2.)—If such vessel does not hold a certificate, or if the certificate is no longer in force, the vessel "shall be liable to survey," and upon such survey being made, the surveyors, if satisfied that they can with propriety do so, may grant a certificate; or the surveyor may grant a certificate without survey, if satisfied that the vessel is not intended to carry passengers (the plural importing the singular). Without a certificate the vessel is unable to obtain port clearance.

Bombay Act II of 1864, section 4.

Bombay General Clauses Act.

(3.)—The S. S. *Algitha* arrived in the port of Kurrachee with a passenger on board, and held *no certificate from the Board of Trade of any kind*, and therefore, under the Act of 1873, a certificate could not be granted by the surveyor without making a survey, and without a certificate the vessel could not leave the port. There was, therefore, no option but to make the survey, and the fees for survey were charged at the usual rates sanctioned by law.

Note.—This fact has been ascertained by subsequent enquiry from the Master Attendant.

(4.)—The only point of contention is whether the ship was liable to survey or not, and, under section 4 of Bombay Act IV of 1873, it undoubtedly was so liable, because it held no certificate from the Board of Trade. It is true that the English Merchant Shipping Act of 1876, section 16, allows a steam-ship to carry passengers not exceeding twelve in number, although she has not been surveyed by the Board of Trade as a passenger steamer, and does not carry a Board of Trade certificate; but this permission in no way exonerates Indian port officials from the duty of seeing that certain requirements of Bombay Acts II of 1864 and IV of 1873 are fulfilled before a steam-ship is granted clearance from an Indian port. Consequently, the Master Attendant of Kurrachee could not have legally acted otherwise than as he did act. Without such action the vessel would not have been able to leave the port of Kurrachee, except in defiance of the law; and for defiance of the law in this respect, the master of a vessel is liable to punishment.

(5.)—If it is considered desirable to exempt vessels from liability to survey in cases where the English Merchant Shipping Act dispenses with a certificate of the Board of Trade, then Bombay Act IV of 1873 should be amended by the addition of a proviso to this effect to section 4; but until such an amendment is made, the port authorities will have no option but to follow the course which has been the subject of complaint in the present case.

From G. C. PARKER, ESQ., *Master Attendant, Kurrachee, to the Commissioner in Sind,—No. 766, dated 20th July* 1880.

I have the honour to return the original papers noted in the margin, received with your memorandum No. 978, dated 15th instant, Marine Department, and beg to report that the S. S. *Algitha* having arrived at this port carrying a passenger, she was consequently surveyed under section 4 of the "Steam Vessel Survey Amendment Act of 1873" (Bombay Act IV of 1873), and the *Algitha* intending to carry the same passenger from hence to Elephant Point, no certificate of the nature required by section 7 could have been issued; this section provides for a penalty of Rs. 500 if, after such a certificate has been issued, the master takes on board a passenger.

Memorandum No. 2388, dated 8th July 1880, from Government; Messrs. Adamson & Short's letter, dated 11th May 1880, to Secretary of State for India; and Secretary of State's letter No. 26, dated 10th June 1880.

2. Section 16 of the amended Merchant Shipping Act of 1876, quoted by Messrs. Adamson and Short, does not, as far as I am aware, apply to British ports in India; if it did so apply, the Bombay Act IV of 1873, "The Steam Vessels Survey Amendment Act," would have been repealed or amended, which, however, has not been done.

3. I brought to the notice of the Commissioner in Sind—*vide* correspondence marginally noted—the manner commanders of vessels endeavour to evade survey under the Act, by having the passengers they carry entered on the ship's articles as a portion of the crew.

No. 446, dated 24th April 1877, from Master Attendant to Commissioner in Sind.
No. 561, dated 2nd May 1877, Commissioner in Sind's reply.

From H. CLEVELAND, Esq., *Offg. Solicitor to the Government of Bombay, to the Secretary to the Government of Bombay, Marine Department,—No.* 1133, *dated 7th August* 1880.

With reference to your memorandum No. 343M, dated the 6th August instant, I have the honour to refer you to the correspondence which I had with Government in regard to the ship *Emma Lawson* in 1877, namely, my letter No. 318, dated the 7th April 1877, the opinion of the Hon'ble Mr. Marriott, No. 15 of 1877, of the 4th of May, and the Resolution of Government, No. 648, in the Marine Department, of the 18th May, 1877. It appears to me that I cannot do better than answer your present reference by stating that, as it was decided that the *Emma Lawson* did not require to be surveyed, I do not think it was necessary to survey the *Algitha*. The only difference I observe between the two cases is that, while it was stated that the *Emma Lawson* did not intend taking any passengers from Bombay, Mr. Parker, in his letter to the Master Attendant, Kurrachee, dated 20th July 1880, writes that the *Algitha* intended to carry the same passenger from Kurrachee to Elephant Point. Notwithstanding this, I think the *Algitha* was not liable to survey.

I return the papers.

Memorandum by H. Cleveland, Esq., Offg. Solicitor to the Govt of Bombay,—No. 1224, *dated 26th August* 1880.

Mr. Cleveland begs to state, with reference to memorandum No. 364M, dated the 17th August instant, that, after perusing the further opinion of the Hon'ble the Advocate-General and the Resolution of Government

referred to in the memorandum under a reply, he was still of opinion that neither the *Emma Lawson* nor the *Algitha* was liable to survey under Act IV of 1873, but as this opinion is not in accordance with that of the Hon'ble Mr. Marriott, Advocate-General, he thought it better to lay the papers before Mr. Latham, who has written his opinion, No. 84 of the 23rd August instant, copy of which is now forwarded together with the papers.

Opinion of F. L. Latham, Esq., Acting Advocate-General, Bombay,— No. 84, dated 23rd August 1880.

Bombay Act II of 1864, as amended by Bombay Act IV of 1873, is a most difficult Act to construe, and I confess to having considerable doubt as to the true result of the combined effect of the two Acts. I think that section 1, Act II of 1864, was confined in its operations to steamers either plying altogether in Bombay waters, or to British steamers passing to and fro between a port of the Presidency of Bombay and some other port. If section 1 of Act IV of 1873 had stood alone, I should have been disposed to think that section 1 thereof was similarly limited so far as British steamers were concerned, with the additional limitation that they must be steamers carrying passengers, though no doubt the expression "carrying passengers between" is vaguer than that of "plying between." But after considering the following sections, especially sections 5 and 6, I feel constrained to the conclusion that the effect of Act IV of 1873 is to render all British steamers, either bringing passengers to, or taking passengers from, a port in the Presidency of Bombay, liable to survey under these Acts. At the time that Act IV of 1873 was

passed, the 303rd section of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, was in force; and I think it probable that the expression "carrying passengers between, &c." is an inaccurate equivalent for the words "carrying passengers to or from, &c." in the English Act.

In 1876 was passed the Merchant Shipping Act, 1876, the 16th section of which exempts from the necessity of carrying a certificate, and consequently from survey under the Act of 1854, any steam-ship carrying passengers not exceeding 12.

The question is, has the Merchant Shipping Act, 1876, repealed Bombay Act IV of 1873, so far as the Bombay Act requires British ships carrying passengers not exceeding 12 in number, either to produce a Board of Trade or other specified certificate, or to submit to survey? I think there can be no doubt that the policy of the two Acts is different in this respect; and further, that the English Legislature of 1876 would probably have repealed the Bombay enactment, so far as it went beyond their own Act, if its existence had been brought to their notice. But having regard to the usual, though not invariable, rule in the interpretation of statutes, that "a general later law does not abrogate an earlier special one" (v. Maxwell, 157), I think, though not without doubt, that the 16th section of the Merchant Shipping Act has not repealed any part of Bombay Act IV of 1873. I have said that I am not without doubt on the point, and I think that such doubt is justified by a perusal of the English Law Reports of the last few years, which show how widely the Judges have differed as to the effect of later general Acts upon earlier special ones.

At the same time I think it most undesirable that this conflict between the English and Bombay enactments should be allowed to continue, as it certainly seems a hardship on the owner of a steamer in the position of the *Algitha* to be made liable to a survey here from which she was exempt according to English law. I would suggest that either Bombay Act IV of 1873 should be amended so as to bring it into harmony with the present English law, or that Bombay Acts II of 1864 and IV of 1873 should be repealed and a new Act substituted. I should be disposed to recommend the latter course, as I think that other difficulties may be found to arise in the construction of the combined Acts of 1864 and 1873, and it may be hard to avoid increasing these difficulties if another amending Act is passed.

With regard to the fee of Rs. 70 levied from the owners of the *Algitha*, I think that the levy of that fee was authorized by the law in force in the Bombay Presidency. But it may be a proper matter for the consideration of His Excellency in Council whether, under the circumstances of the case, that fee should not be returned to the owners of the steamer.

From H. MORLAND, Esq., *Port Officer, Bombay, to the Secretary to the Government of Bombay, Marine Department,—No.* 1983, *dated* 31*st August* 1880.

The point under reference frequently arises in connection with vessels which, trusting to the exemption contained in section 16 of the Merchant Shipping Amendment Act of 1876, have brought one or more passengers to this port, when the voyage having been performed, and the passenger having reached his destination safely, the act of

compelling the vessel to undergo survey becomes really an absurdity, and the exaction of the survey fee an imposition, except that, under section 5 of Act IV of 1873, the surveyor is bound to enquire if any passenger has arrived in any steam-vessel arriving in any port of the Presidency of Bombay ; and under section 6, if no passenger has arrived by the vessel, if she is not intended to carry passengers, or that she already holds a certificate to carry passengers, to grant a certificate that the vessel is entitled to be exempted from survey.

Without this certificate the vessel cannot obtain a port clearance or pilot, and consequently cannot proceed to sea without breaking the law ; a survey has therefore to be held, and a certificate to be granted, to enable the vessel to obtain a port clearance.

The exaction has been greatly complained of, and is a vexatious and annoying one, but is, I apprehend, necessary to be enforced until the law be repealed.

I would invite attention to the letter from the Board of Trade, which is attached to Bombay Government Resolution in the Marine Department, No. 506 of the 27th May 1878, which specially deals with the Merchant Shipping Act of 1876, as to the extent it is applicable to India.

With reference to this special section 16, it is not stated that a British steam-vessel conveying less than 12 passengers is exempted from survey in India under the local Acts, but that if an Indian steam-ship, *i. e.* a steam-ship registered in India, were to carry any number of passengers less than 12, to or from, or between,

any place or places in the United Kingdom, the Board of Trade would not require the vessel to be surveyed, and the inference to be drawn is, that the Board of Trade would expect vessels registered in the United Kingdom to meet with a similar exemption in India; but, as advised by the Advocates-General Marriott and Latham, it is impossible, until the law is altered.

I would therefore beg to express my concurrence in the view expressed by Mr. Latham in the last paragraph but one of his opinion, and to state that it is highly desirable that both Acts II of 1864 and IV of 1873 be repealed, and a new Act be substituted, as many other points and difficulties arise in connection with these Acts, which can be provided for if the new Act be framed in harmony with the English Act; and further, as the Bengal Steam Passenger Ship Act is not in exact accord with the Bombay Acts, it would be a desirable opportunity to constitute one Steam Vessel Survey Act for all India.

THE MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.

The Government have asked for the opinion of the Committee upon a further amendment of the law relating to Merchant Shipping. The Committee have found reason for demurring to many proposals which, if acted upon, might prove very detrimental to shipowners and seafaring men, without giving any countervailing advantage to the public. The Committee have also taken occa-

sion respectfully to deprecate a too lavish exercise of legislative powers, and to urge upon Government the policy of abstaining from further enactments, until publicly called for or shewn to be necessary by some glaring abuse or wrong for which no remedy exists.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 21st May 1881.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 572 of the 1st April, handing me, for the opinion of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, a copy of the Bill to again amend the Law relating to Merchant Shipping.

The Committee regret to see further partial legislation upon this subject. The Imperial Acts relating to shipping have been compiled by some of the ablest lawyers in the world, on the basis of precedent and experience derived from the practical working of millions of tons of shipping, and after repeated and exhaustive discussion by picked men, representing not the shipping interest alone but every class of Englishman, notably including the advanced philanthropists; the Committee would most respectfully deprecate the Indian Government attempting to legislate upon points which Parliament has considered it expedient to leave alone.

The Committee agree that the Indian law requires amendment; but their opinion is strong that the amendment should take the form of a general repeal of existing

local Acts, so far as they conflict with Imperial legislation, and of a wholesale adoption into the Indian Statutes of the English law as now in force, without omission or addition beyond such as are absolutely necessary in order to meet the special circumstances of native seamen.

The Committee observe that up to a certain point this view is admitted in the Statement of Objects and Reasons. The Government justly remark upon the inconvenience of the existence, side by side, of double provisions relating to the same subject-matter. Where, however, the Committee have the misfortune of differing from Government is in this, *viz.*, that the Statement would almost seem to imply that whatever legislation is possible is therefore desirable; whereas the Committee consider that the multiplication of Statutes is in itself a great evil, and they would urge that no legislation be undertaken unless publicly called for or shewn to be necessary by some glaring abuse or wrong for which no remedy exists.

It appears to the Committee unreasonable and anomalous that a vessel built and owned and registered in England and liable to English law should, immediately on arrival in India, be made subject to a different law and a different mode of procedure.

Many sections of the Bill in question seem to be mere re-enactments of other Acts still in force. In other instances the alterations proposed appear undesirable to the Committee, who would beg to offer for the consideration of Government the following additional remarks:—

Chapter II, Section 6.—The Committee hazard a suggestion that possibly the word "materially" (damaged)

contained in the previous Act may have been dropped out of the present Act through oversight.

If not, the proposed alteration in the existing law is most serious, and lays open the way to interference with navigation on the slightest pretence and for the most trivial cause.

Whereas now an inquiry is to be held only in cases when a ship is lost, abandoned or *materially* damaged, &c., the proposed Bill provides for an investigation in cases of "stranding or damage," without defining the extent of the damage calling for investigation. The section goes on to impose a penalty of Rs. 500, or imprisonment for three months, upon any person bound under this section to give notice of damage, &c., who shall fail to do so immediately on his arrival at the nearest port. The effect of this change in the law will be that a master will not know what damage to report, and what not to report, and he will therefore, to avoid the risk of penalty, probably report everything, however trivial, such as the carrying away of a studding-sail boom, or the springing of a top-gallant mast, or other unimportant accidents such as occur on almost every voyage. The section provides that the officer receiving the information of the casualty shall forthwith report in writing such information to the Local Government, and the Local Government will thereupon have to decide whether a formal investigation is called for. It appears to the Committee that either the Local Government's time will be wasted in wading through reports of no importance, or that cases really requiring investigation will escape attention amidst the mass of irrelevant matter. It is quite possible, the Committee are aware, for small acci-

dents, not amounting to material damage or serious stranding, to occur, such as it might be useful to investigate, but they think that the escape of the offender, when no real harm has been done, a lesser evil than the constant reporting and inquiry into scores of trivial matters which would benefit no one, and would create considerable irritation. It is at all events clear that the Imperial Legislature has seen reason for adopting this view.

Chapter II, Section 6, Clause "d" provides for a case in which a ship *that has been lost* proceeds direct from the place of loss to a place in British India.

The Committee notice this extraordinary mistake merely to point their suggestion that the entire Act requires much fuller consideration than it appears to the Committee to have received.

Chapter II, Sections 7-12 deal with the form and nature of the charges to be made against any person, but leave the question of procedure to the discretion of the Court, which may consist of a magistrate and one other person, though if the Court care to do so it may appoint an assessor; provided only that the assessor shall be a person conversant with maritime affairs. The English law is far more precise and equitable, and the Indian Government could not do better than import into this Act the provisions of the English law upon this point, and at the same time adopt the simple rules of procedure which have been published by the Lord High Chancellor in accordance with the provisions of the law. The Committee see no reason why the important concessions made to the merchant service by Imperial enactment, *viz.*, the

selection of assessors from men of a certain experience and qualification and position in each grade of masters, engineers and owners (on the just principle of trying every man by his peers) and the publication of the rules of procedure should in India be denied to men who are considered to have committed acts requiring investigation.

If in England the necessity for such rules has been recognised, it is surely desirable to adopt the like precautions where it is proposed to give powers so extensive to district officials who cannot reasonably be expected to possess any very thorough knowledge of maritime law or admiralty practice.

Chapter II, Section 15, *Second Paragraph*.—The Committee doubt whether the mere submission of a report to the Local Government is a sufficient compliance with the provisions of the Imperial Acts, and they would suggest that from "shall" to the end be left out, and that the words "whose duty it shall be to forward it to the said Board" be added.

Chapter IV, Section 25.—The wording of this section makes it appear a new one, though in point of fact, a scale of provisions for native seamen, approved by Government, already exists. Such a scale is desirable; but rather in the interests of owners than of seamen whose demands it is most difficult to satisfy. In drawing up any fresh scale, the Committee venture to suggest that it should be first submitted to the Chamber of Commerce, and care should be taken not to exceed the present very liberal allowance. It is not only in the quantity, but also in the quality of the provisions that lascars are difficult to please. Men, who catering for themselves, are content with ordinary

qualities of rice, and who use mustard oil of ordinary native manufacture, no sooner come on boardship than they demand rice of the best quality, complain if ghee (the substitute for oil) is not of the very best, require tea, and refuse ordinary sugar, and in all these matters are supported by the shipping-master, who will pass nothing unless of the choicest quality. The cost of feeding a lascar at sea does not fall short of Rs. 8 per mensem; whereas, relatives of these very men support (that is to say, house, feed and clothe) themselves and their families upon a salary which frequently does not exceed this sum. The Committee do not grudge the lascar his liberal treatment, but they consider that no case has been proved for making it more liberal than it now is.

The Committee think it important to remark here upon the manner in which the shipping-master insists upon interpreting the permissive "may" of the present Act into the imperative "shall." Section 71 of Act I of 1859 provides that the shipping-master at any port in India, by himself or his deputy, may enter at any time on board of any ship upon which seamen have been shipped at such port, and inspect the provisions and water provided for the use of the crew, and the medicines and appliances, and the accommodation for seamen prescribed by this Act or by the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854.

The rule in Calcutta under this section is to insist upon all provisions being inspected before a vessel is allowed her port clearance, even when no sort of complaint has been made. As a result, provisions have to be on board at least 48 hours before a vessel sails, and as now-a-days coasting steamers are frequently in port only three or four

days, it is often as much as can be done to get the provisions on board in time for the inspection. Here, again, the Committee would carefully guard themselves against seeming to object to inspection. They merely offer these remarks to shew that the lascar already has protection to the utmost extent which is consistent with not interfering unduly with trade.

Chapter V.—The provisions of the chapter greatly extend the already full and sufficient powers contained in Act I, and in the Indian Ports Act, 1875, and are likely to prove very mischievous to the shipping interest, and in fact, to the well-being of owners and seamen alike. Most ample protection is already afforded to the life, the health, the property and the liberty of the lascar, and those are not his friends who encourage trouble and dispute between himself and his masters, and who thus interpose uncalled-for difficulties in the way of his employment.

The specific objections which the Committee have to urge to the provisions of this chapter are as follows:—

1. The powers proposed to be conferred on the Port Inspector are already exercised by other officers, and the creation of this additional official is therefore uncalled-for and to be deprecated on grounds of simplicity, despatch of business, and economy.

2. Everything necessary or desirable which he is to do is already efficiently done: thus—

(*a*). Accommodation for crew is certified before grant of register, and section 71 of Act I of 1859 provides that the shipping-master may at any time inspect the same.

(*b*). Provisions aud water for crew are inspected by the shipping-master under the same Act of 1859.

(*c*). Provisions and water and accommodation and medicine for passengers are cared for under Act VIII of 1876, and are inspected and certified to by the Port officer before every voyage.

(*d*). The shipping office is always open to hear complaints from the crew (section 72 of Act 1 of 1859), and is availed of for the purpose to the fullest extent. The police court is also at hand.

(*e*). The health officer visits vessels to enquire into health and sanitary arrangements, and the Committee cannot find that information has been withheld from him, or his services and advice otherwise than welcomed and treated with the utmost respect.

3. One special and novel duty of the Port Inspector is to be (clause b) to "medically examine all or any of the persons on board."

Such a power in the hands of an over-zealous officer might well become intolerable, and can rarely be of value in a country which is the home of most diseases likely to be imported. Provisions already exist for dealing with exceptional cases of virulent sickness. The Inspector would be technically within his rights under the Act if he were to insist on stripping captain and officers after the fashion of a regimental surgeon passing recruits, and it is not expedient that any official should be thus furnished with weapons for provoking a breach of the peace.

4. The inquisitorial proceeding which the Inspector is in section 18 *b*, directed to adopt on first boarding a vessel,

viz., to ask whether any person on board such vessel desires to make any complaints, is, in the Committee's opinion, highly objectionable and uncalled-for. It is directly calculated to encourage lascars in manufacturing frivolous complaints, and that seamen, all the world over, are apt at such matters, is notorious. The Committee have pointed out that machinery for the redress of real grievances already exists, and they earnestly deprecate the passing of an enactment which they cannot but regard as one for the promotion of spiteful and false charges, the investigation of which will occupy valuable time, and thus interfere alike with public business and with trade to a most serious extent.

5. The intolerable harassment which this Act legalises might be repeated at every Indian port in the course of a coasting voyage, and might, under certain conditions which the Committee cannot regard as visionary, become tyrannous to a degree which would render impossible the employment of native crews. The officials would be protected from the consequences of abuse of their powers by the fact of their being public officers ; and no provision seems to have been thought necessary for the punishment of seamen who may, individually or in combination, inflict wilful loss on their employers by formulating false or frivolous charges.

Far more called for than any new legislation, is, in the Committee's opinion, an enquiry into the practical application of Acts already in force.

ESTABLISHMENT OF TELEPHONIC EXCHANGES.

The Committee have pleasure in announcing that the privilege of introducing and working Telephonic Exchanges has been conceded to private enterprise. The procedure of the Post Office Department in Great Britain is to be followed, and a license granted for each Exchange, subject to a royalty and other necessary restrictions.

The Committee understand that the formation of Exchanges in each of the presidency cities will promptly follow the settlement of the terms of the license, which is now being prepared by the Government.

From Government of India to Chamber.

No. 456*T., Simla, the* 13*th November* 1880.

The Government of India having under consideration the question of introducing the Telephone into India as part of the machinery of the Telegraph Department, and of establishing Telephonic communication wherever there is a reasonable promise of its being advantageously worked, I am directed to request that you will obtain, for the information of the Government of India, an expression of the opinion of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce

on the subject, and also as to how far, in its opinion, a Telephonic Exchange, if introduced, is likely to be availed of in Calcutta.

From Chamber to Government of India.

Calcutta, 30th November 1880.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have had under consideration your letter No. 456T., of the 13th instant, relative to the introduction of the Telephone into India as part of the machinery of the Telegraph Department and to its establishment generally if it is likely to be advantageously worked.

In reply I am directed to state that, in their opinion, judging from the remarkable success that has attended the system of Telephonic communication in the various countries where it is already in operation, its inauguration in India would probably result in its gradual acceptance by the public.

From the experience acquired in other places of the value of and apparent necessity for Telephonic Exchanges, the Committee are inclined to the opinion that the introduction of the system into Calcutta would be increasingly availed of, and would, after a time, be found of great advantage to the mercantile community.

The degree of encouragement likely to be given by the commercial public would depend a good deal on the cost, and probably a reasonable rate of subscription—not exceeding 20 rupees a month—would induce a fair trial of the capabilities and utility of the proposed scheme, and might eventually lead to its permanent adoption.

The Committee, in thus replying to your special inquiry, desire me to add that they do not wish it to be supposed that they believe it desirable for the Government to undertake such a scheme to the exclusion of private enterprise.

From Chamber to Government of India.

Calcutta, 21st January 1881.

In continuation of my letter of the 30th November, I am instructed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to ask what the intentions of the Government are regarding the introduction of the Telephone into Calcutta.

The Committee find an increasing desire that the Telephone should be introduced, and a growing feeling that it will prove to be a great advantage to the commercial community, as it already is in so many important towns of Europe and America.

They are doubtful however that a work such as this can be undertaken in a satisfactory manner by the Government; whilst the State could make little revenue out of it, the public interests would be much better served if the scheme were left entirely to private enterprise.

The Committee thoroughly respect the right of the Government to the exclusive working of the Telegraph system, but they submit that the Telephone as proposed could not in any way interfere with this, and any chance of its doing so might be guarded against by a limitation within towns, of the distances where it was to be worked.

They understand that the representative of the Oriental Telephone Company has brought to this country a large stock of material and an experienced staff, and that, in event of the Government granting the concession or license required, the work could be put in hand at once; whereas if undertaken by Government the plant would have to be brought and a staff trained, which would cause great delay.

Under all the circumstances they trust the Government will speedily decide to leave the work to private enterprise, with such limitations as may be deemed necessary; and they feel confident that if this be done, the work will be carried out in a far more satisfactory manner to all concerned than it can possibly be if Government maintain the monopoly and exclusive right to enter on the scheme.

From Government of India to Chamber.

No. 80T, Simla, the 8th April 1881.

With reference to correspondence ending with your letter of the 21st January, I am directed to inform you that His Excellency the Governor-General in Council has decided to admit, under certain restrictions, the introduction of Telephone Exchanges by private enterprise in the cities and towns of India.

The exact terms under which the licenses for such Telephonic Exchanges will be granted are under consideration, and when finally approved they will be notified in the *Gazette of India* for the information of the public.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.

No. 345*M*, *Calcutta, 2nd December* 1880.

I am directed to forward herewith a copy of a letter from Government of India, Public Works Department, No. 466T, dated the 15th ultimo, on the question of introducing Telephonic communication into India, and to request that the Lieutenant-Governor may be favored with the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce on the subject generally, as well as on the probability of a Telephonic Exchange being made use of to any extent if introduced into Calcutta.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 13th December 1880.

I am directed to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 345M. of the 2nd instant, forwarding copy of a letter from the Government of India on the subject of introducing Telephonic communication into India, and to submit, for the information of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, copy of a letter addressed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to the Government of India, on the subject of your reference, which they hope His Honor will be pleased to accept as conveying their views on the question.

SAILING SHIPS BILL OF LADING – CALCUTTA TO UNITED KINGDOM.

The Committee have much pleasure in announcing the satisfactory settlement of a long pending question of considerable importance to shippers of produce from this port.

Their last Report contained the proceedings of a Special Meeting of the Chamber which resulted in the nomination of several gentlemen resident in London to form a Committee with full authority to arrange with a Committee of Shipowners a bill of lading for sailing ships homewards from Calcutta, which would meet the views of all parties: and the following letter from those gentlemen, together with the Report of a Sub-Committee and their condensed notes on each subject of discussion, will place members in possession of the result of the several interviews which the Chamber's representatives have had with the London Shipowners' Committee, and of the united efforts and labors in framing a document acceptable to all interests concerned.

The Committee draw special attention to the two following points :—

1.—That the term *homewards* means or is applicable to the *United Kingdom* only.

2.—The London Committee's recomendation to shippers to see that the terms of their policies are consistent with the terms of the new form of Bill of Lading.

The Committee desire to record their special obligations to the London representatives of this Chamber for the very valuable services they have rendered to the commercial community of Calcutta.

London, 29th April, 1881.

H. W. J. WOOD, Esq.,

Secretary, Bengal Chamber of Commerce,

CALCUTTA.

DEAR SIR,

We have to report that under the authority deputed to us by a Resolution of your Chamber of 21st June last, we have agreed with the Shipowners' Committee on a Bill of Lading for Sailing Ships from Calcutta to the United Kingdom, as per form marked A herewith.

It is agreed that any of the further exceptions, heat, leakage, breakage, sweat or decay, may be inserted in the document, but only in Bills of Lading for produce to which the exceptions proposed are reasonably applicable, *e.g.* leakage in Bills of Lading for Liquids.

It is agreed that this form shall come into use for all sailing ships entered outwards at Calcutta for the United Kingdom on and after 1st July, 1881.

The form enclosed marked A is certified by the Chairman of the Shipowners' Committee and by our Chairman, and this certificated copy is to remain in the possession of your Chamber for future reference, to prevent unauthorised modifications of the wording. To make still more sure that no unauthorised modifications, such as some steam shipowners have gradually introduced into their Bills of Lading, can be introduced, we have arranged with the shipowners that the forms for regular use are to be such only as are printed and sold by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce or their nominee. We have also arranged that the form issued should bear on it that it is printed and issued by you or for you, and by whom, which will doubtless have your approval. If you issue a circular to the Calcutta merchants to apprise them of the form now arranged, we would suggest that you state in the circular that the only valid forms are such as bear on them that they are printed and issued by you.

This Bill of Lading now agreed on, though a very great improvement on the one which called forth the Calcutta merchants' protest of 29th August 1879, is still a compromise. We do not consider that the shipowners have clearly proved the necessity for any alteration of the old form of sailing ship Bill of Lading, except as regards the two clauses, "Loss or damage from fire on board in hulk or craft or on shore," and that fixing the value of short deliveries. The other two alterations which we have allowed, viz., the new exception clause—"Any act, neglect or default whatsoever, of Pilots, Master or Crew in the navigation of the ship in the ordinary course of the voyage," and the words, "without discount" in the freight payment clause, we conceded on condition of the

shipowners sweeping away the many other objectionable proposals against which the Calcutta protest stood out.

Considering how many of the objectionable items now expunged have almost become customary through the laxity of merchants in other trades, and the laxity of Calcutta merchants regarding their own steamer Bill of Lading, we think you will agree with us that the form now arranged is on the whole a satisfactory settlement.

We have to report as follows on the two objectionable clauses admitted:—

The clause "Any act, neglect," &c., although defining a distinctly insurable risk, and one which is probably insurable in every case without extra premium, we nevertheless consider to be wrong in principle, in that it tends to limit the shipowners' responsibility for a proper choice of officers and men. In the form in which we have allowed it, the scope of the exception is, however, so narrowly circumscribed by the words, "in the navigation of the ship in the ordinary course of the voyage," that a shipowner would scarcely dare, relying on it alone, to be less particular than heretofore as to whom he employed, seeing that for any neglect or default involving any deviation in the voyage, or for any neglect or default within the ordinary course of the voyage other than a neglect or default in navigation, the shipowner would still be liable. You will require to warn your Calcutta merchants, that the cover of this clause will now have to be included in their Marine Insurance policies.

The words "without discount" in the freight payment clause, do away with the two months' interest from ships

reporting, at present allowed to consignees, on prepayments of sailing ships' freight, but they do not allow the shipowner to charge interest from ships reporting or from ships unloading, on freights not paid till later delivery is taken. As against this concession to the shipowner we would have liked to insert as an agreement in the Bill of Lading, the present custom of allowing the consignee to take away the goods from ships' side on paying 90 @ 95 per cent. of the estimated freight, he holding the balance as a security for, and until the ascertainment of, full delivery in good order and condition. We felt, however, that the shipowners' objection, that this would bind them to deliver without full freight, even to people whose solvency they doubted, was fatal to any definite agreement in the Bill of Lading to this effect. We had therefore to be content with the words, "but otherwise subject to the customary mode of payment," the understanding with the shipowners being, that the release on payment of 90 @ 95 per cent. of estimated freight (the percentages are their own proposal) is to apply to all goods. In order to thoroughly establish this custom, we would suggest that you issue a circular to the Calcutta Merchants, explaining this arrangement, and detailing why it could not be definitely inserted in the Bill of Lading. This will make every consignee insist on his right to hold a small balance of freight, and so tend to permanently establish this, to the consignee, very valuable custom.

The marginal quality marks clsuse, ought not, properly speaking, to be in the Bill of Lading at all, it being a condition which has been practically fulfilled, when the Bill of Lading has been signed for quality marks. Ship-

owners, however, insisted on the arrangement come to being recorded in the Bill of Lading; and our difficulty then was to find a wording which could not be construed as conditional. That is, we wanted to make sure that after the goods are once accepted by the mate and the boat note signed; the ship cannot turn round and try to get free from the responsibility of wrong delivery by attempting to prove that the quality mark is not exactly of the same size as, or not exactly contiguous to, the leading mark. We think the wording adopted, and the fact of the clause being a marginal note, and thus something different from a specific condition of the signed Bill of Lading, will secure our object. The understanding with the shipowners is, that we are to satisfy their mate that the quality marks are according to this new rule, but that once he accepts the goods, the responsibility of the ship for correct delivery is unconditional. We would suggest that a circular be issued as soon as possible to the merchants and balers shipping from Calcutta, calling their attention to this new rule of quality marks coming into force 1st July next.

That your Chamber may have the opportunity of examining the grounds on which each proposal of the shipowners was rejected or allowed, we beg to enclose the report of our sub-committee, and the condensed notes of their discussions with the shipowners; the latter, with marginal notes, which bring the several items up to the Bill of Lading now arranged.

We would only further remark, that on the one hand the shipowners have presistently brought forward *against us the fact that the Calcutta trade accept in the Steamer*

Bill of Lading and without protest, the clauses we have been rejecting in the Sailing Ship Bill of Lading; and on the other hand that this enquiry into the Sailing Ship Bill of Lading has opened our eyes to the fact that the Steamer Bill of Lading, as it now stands, is an extremely dangerous document. The present policy of the steam ship companies seems to be to pay many small claims, which by the strict terms of their Bill of Lading contract they are not bound to pay; but there is no doubt that when the first serious claim arises the steam ship companies will take the full shelter of the terms of their Bill of Lading contract, and the eyes of the shipper will be opened, probably for the first time, to the unfairness and absurdity of the terms of his steamer Bill of Lading.

We have further to enclose herewith copy of a circular which we have thought it desirable to issue to the Calcutta trade here, announcing the arrangement now come to.

The purpose for which we were called together having now been accomplished, we have to announce that this Committee is dissolved with the issue of this report.

Mr. H. Reinhold had left for Calcutta before this report could be drawn up, but previous to his departure he had approved the Bill of Lading now arranged.

We are, dear Sir,

Yours respectfully,

F. W. HEILGERS, *Chairman.*
J. N. BULLEN,
P. J. NICOLAS,
E. A. MAVROGORDATO,
WILL. MCFARLANE.

REPORT

OF THE

Sub-Committee of Merchants on the Calcutta Sailing Ship Homeward Bill of Lading.

In compliance with your request we have had frequent consultations with the Sub-Committee of the General Shipowners' Society, to discuss the new form of Bill of Lading for Sailing Ships from Calcutta, submitted by them. Previous to meeting these gentlemen, we had made it our business to study the proposed Bill of Lading, and to take the advice of Mr. Hart, of Messrs. Lattey & Hart, Solicitors, on its several points. The following is the result of that preliminary study :—

1st.—We find that Messrs. Freshfield, in advising the original Merchants' Committee (Messrs. Ralli & Blackwood), were limited in their instructions to seeing that no change was made in the Bill of Lading which would affect the shippers' right to recover under an insurance policy.

2nd.—We find that, besides clauses which concern insurance, many new clauses, which Messrs. Freshfield were scarcely called upon to consider under such limited instructions, are inserted in the Bill of Lading.

As to the first point, it appeared to us that, inasmuch as many shippers carry part or all of their own insurance risk, the whole ground of objection to the Bill of Lading was not covered by Messrs. Freshfield's instructions, and further that, inasmuch as the Underwriters are not represented in these negotiations, we are bound to see that

any burdens which are transferred from the Shipowners to the Underwriters by the new clauses are such only as should fairly and reasonably be so transferred.

The matters of the second head are mostly such as solicitors are scarcely competent to give an opinion on, but have rather to be considered by the practical experience of merchants. We have sought to deal with these by the light of our own experience, and any stand we have taken on them is, of course, subject to the confirmation or otherwise of the full Committée.

Before meeting the Shipowners' Sub-Committee we had come to this further conclusion, that a Bill of Lading with anything beyond one or two simple exceptions at its foot is, in itself, a very objectionable document, for the following reasons:—A Bill of Lading is, in every separate case, a specific contract; and yet if there are numerous foot clauses, it is in practice impossible that these can be read through by a responsible assistant and considered in all their bearing on each separate shipment. This has been our own experience with the present very objectionable practice in the steamer Bill of Lading. We have repeatedly had goods shipped from Calcutta under clauses which never would have been accepted had the Bill of Lading been read through. Further, unless the foot clauses are so few and simple that any printed addition to them is at once detected, the way is open to indefinite modifications in the shipowners' favour, unobserved by the shippers in the trade. This gradual modification in the shipowners' favour has been the course of events with the outward steamer Bill of Lading, notwithstanding that a fixed form was agreed on by a Committee of Shipowners and Merchants

in 1872, and a certified copy deposited at Lloyd's, and to a most unwarrantable extent has it been the case with the steamer Bill of Lading homewards since it was considered, though not absolutely agreed on, by the same Committee.

We, therefore, approached the shipowners with the feeling that we should allow only such new clauses as could be shewn to be reasonably necessary for the shipowners' protection, and that we should exclude all that was in any way unnecessary, and everything that was not strictly applicable to every separate shipment likely to be made from Calcutta.

The result of our meetings with the shipowners has been that they have handed in a Bill of Lading proposing certain modifications, as per copy herewith. We consider these modifications so inadequate, that we think it necessary to put before you a copy of our condensed notes of our discussions with the shipowners, and to request that you give the matter such study as will enable you to further instruct us. We scarcely think the modifications now proposed are all that the shipowners will give, but we think it well that our whole Committee should be thoroughly posted on the subject, before meeting the shipowners' Committee.

We take the liberty of commending to your perusal "A Treatise on the Law of Bill of Lading," by Eugene Leggett, (Stevens and Sons, London,) 1880; a handbook which has been often referred to in our discussion with the Shipowners.

H. REINHOLD.
W. McFARLANE.

London, 17th February 1881.

Condensed Notes of the Meetings of the Sub-Committee of Shipowners (MESSRS. CORRY AND PARK) *with the Sub-Committee* (MESSRS. REINHOLD AND MCFARLANE) *of the Mandatories of the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce, regarding a homeward Bill of Lading for Sailing Ships from Calcutta.*

12th January, 1881.—Intimated that the Madras Chamber of Commerce withdraw from this negotiation.

Subjects of Discussion and Notes by Sub-Committee of the Discussion.	Observations.
Bill of Lading homewards.	
M.—Would like to know whether "homewards" includes only to United Kingdom, as, in event of Bill of Lading including ships for United States ports, the difference of decisions in the United States courts on the point of negligence, as compared with the exception of negligence now sought by shipowners, would have to be considered.	Proceedings subsequent to Sub-Committee's report, 17th February 1881.
S.—Would like the Bill of Lading to be an outward Bill of Lading from Calcutta, rather than a homeward Bill of Lading only; and with a view to its coming into use for other Indian ports as well as Calcutta.	Fixed at request of Merchants' Committee as "Calcutta to United Kingdom."
Discussion of remainder of Bill of Lading proceeded without any understanding being come to on this point, except that merchants declined to enter into consideration of anything but a Calcutta Bill of Lading.	
At a later meeting the decision of the shipowners was for "Bill of Lading outwards from Calcutta," but merchants reserve the point for the view of their full committee.	

Subjects of Discussion and Notes by Sub-Committee of the Discussion.	Observations.
"If quality marks are used, they are to be of the same size as the leading marks, and contiguous thereto, and the ship shall be responsible for the correct delivery of the same."	
M.—This might quite likely be put forward as a conditional clause—*i.e.*, after the mate has been satisfied with the marking, and has signed the boat-note for quality marks, the captain might still decline to sign Bill of Lading for quality marks, on the ground that *he* did not consider the quality mark to be of the same size as, and sufficiently contiguous to, the leading mark. And when the Bill of Lading is signed for quality marks, in the event of a delivery of wrong assortment on arrival, the plea of non-liability might be put forward on the ground that the goods actually accepted by the receiver had their quality marks not identically of the same size as, and not exactly contiguous to, the leading mark, and that consequently the ship was not liable for such quality marks. We are agéed that, within reason, the marks must be such as satisfy the ship, but we require that the ship, having once admitted her satisfaction by signing the boat-note, the signing of the Bill of Lading and delivery of the goods shall be unconditional.	
S.—We admit that the clause could be construed as conditional (Mr. PARKS). What you want, then, is that after the word "thereto" shall be inserted—"and, if inserted in the shipping notes and accepted by the mate, the captain shall sign Bill of Lading for same, and the ship shall be responsible for them;" or better words to that effect.	
M.—That is exactly what we want to be agreed between us as the rule of the trade, but we don't want the Bill of Lading to be burdened with this clause, or any part of it. It is enough that the trade agree to it. With regard to this clause, and	

Subjects of Discussion and Notes by Sub-Committee of the Discussion.

Observations.

The whole Bill of Lading.

the whole Bill of Lading, we object to the insertion in printing of any clauses except what are absolutely necessary, and are applicable to every shipment, because the practical effect of crowding the Bill of Lading with clauses is proving, by our experience of steamer Bills of Lading, to be that the Bill of Lading, although in effect an important contract, is not, and cannot in practice be, in each case read and considered in its bearing on each separate shipment. Whatever is applicable to *every* separate shipment and absolutely necessary for the shipowner, we are prepared to admit, but no more. In other words, we are prepared to arrange for a general Bill of Lading only in so far as it shall be strictly applicable to all special cases.

S.—That will not satisfy us. Clauses which should be inserted by our captains are apt to be omitted, and if all were inserted, the Bill of Lading would be defaced with stampings all over it. We want the clauses all printed, and you can strike out what is inapplicable.

M.—That will not do. If we ship goods which are to be signed for on a recognised printed form, and after the goods are on board, tender for signature a Bill of Lading with certain clauses deleted, the ship could easily decline to sign the Bill of Lading, on the plea that the deletion of the clauses had not been bargained. Further, your answer only amounts to this,—that your captains and agents may neglect their duty. This is no sufficient reason to outweigh the objections above stated to a Bill of Lading crowded with clauses. Further, a clause which looked at the port of loading, though inapplicable to the particular shipment, quite harmless, and for that reason was not deleted, might quite well, in certain circumstances of disputed delivery, be used to the receiver's detriment, though originally not intended by either side to apply to his goods.

Subjects of Discussion and Notes by Sub-Committee of the Discussion.	Observations.
S.—Objections noted. Pass to the next clause.	
At a later meeting Mr. PARKS gave the wording of the quality marks clause as follows:—"And if such quality marks are inserted in the shipping notes, and the "goods are accepted by the mate, Bill of Lading in conformity therewith shall be "signed by the captain, and the ship shall be responsible for the correct delivery of "the same."	
NOTE.—Mr. PARKS at first rather strongly insisted on the ending being, "De-"livery of goods bearing such marks," but this was rejected as bordering again on the conditional. A further modification since suggests itself to merchants, that the first word "and" of this addition should be altered to "but." The addition would read "But if such quality marks are inserted," &c.	Shipowners again tried to get the ending "bearing such marks," but ending was fixed "correct delivery of the goods."
"From the ship's tackles, where the ship's responsibility shall cease."	
M.—Want to know wherein this differs from the terminating of ship's responsibility now.	Whole clause taken out.
S.—Reply that this involves no change in the present law, but their explanation of how in practice the ship's responsibility at present ceases, does not at all clearly show that it now ceases at the ship's tackles.	
M.—Want the clause struck out, either on the ground that it exactly tallies with present law, and is therefore only filling up the Bill of Lading with useless clauses, or that it is altering the present law, which they will not allow.	

At a later meeting shipowners stated that this clause could not cover loss arising through ship proceeding with delivery for her own convenience, previous to the expiration of the customary 72 hours' notice to receiver.

NOTE.—This seems to merchants doubtful. Further, delivery at present seems to mean, safe delivery at a proper or usual wharf (*see* Leggett, pp. 119, 121), which does not look in any way a hardship for owners. It seems to us that nothing less than this should be sufficient delivery, especially when no claimant has appeared for the goods.

"Or so near thereto as she may safely get."

S.—This clause is wanted, not for such ports as London, Liverpool, or New York, but for such a port as Bremen, or any port which the ship cannot reach with any or all of her cargo; in such cases we want the shipper to pay the lighterage of the whole or any part of the cargo requiring lightering.

M.—The clause then is only wanted for such exceptional cases as scarcely ever happens in Calcutta. Clearly it has nothing to do with chartered ships, but only with ships laid on the berth. In a chartered ship the clause would be debated in drawing out the charter-party, and once in the charter-party the matter is fixed. If you lay a ship on the berth for a certain port, it is your business to know whether she is too big to be quite certain to be able to get to that port with the cargo you intend to put in her. If there is any uncertainty, it is your business to give notice that the ship may not be able to take her whole cargo to the port, and that, in that event, the shipper will have to pay lighterage. We therefore object, even for such unusual voyages, to your having a printed form of Bill of Lading, which would throw this lighterage charge on the shipper, whether you had given notice

Subjects of Discussion and Notes by Sub-Committee of the Discussion.	Observations.
of it or not. For all other cases, inasmuch as each Bill of Lading signed is held in law to be a specific contract, we object to have a printed clause, admittedly inapplicable, lest, in unforeseen circumstances, it might be held to be applicable to our detriment.	
At a later meeting shipowners referred to the case of the *Enxine*, unable to get into the Surrey Commercial Dock, as a case bearing on the necessity for this clause, even for London. (Leggett, p. 92.)	
Omission in the new Bill of Lading of the words in the old Bill of Lading, "Freight to be paid as customary at the port of discharge."	
S.—We mean by this omission to do away with the present two months' interest allowed on sailing ship freights, and to have henceforth a net freight.	Finally arranged "without discount, but subject to the customary mode of payment," *i.e.* abolishing the present 2 months' interest, but retaining to the merchant the present custom of holding in his hands a margin of freight (5% @ 10% of estimated freight) until good delivery in full has been ascertained.
M.—Freight, however, is only earned on delivery in good order and condition, and generally the weight delivered has to be ascertained before the amount of freight earned can be told. We will therefore take the understanding to be, that freight to account only is to be required against freight release, and that final freight is to be due on ascertaining the quantity delivered and the order and condition of the goods as far as concerns, ships' responsibility for same.	
NOTE.—The shipowners proposed to the merchants' committee of 1872 that the payment should be four-fifths of estimated freight against freight release, and the remainder on proved delivery. The 1872 merchants declined that proposal, but we would think it sufficient for our purpose. We suggest that this condition be part of the payment of freight arrangement.	

Subjects of Discussion and Notes by Sub-Committee of the Discussion.	Observations.
If we can arrange a Bill of Lading with only one or two clauses, we suggest that the Bill of Lading be not hampered with this clause, but that it be made a trade arrangement by circular; but if a simple Bill of Lading is not attainable, then this too must be embodied in the document.	
The clause "average as accustomed," which is in both the old and the suggested Bill of Lading.	
S.—Explained that the general custom of shipowners is now to ensure their ships, subject to York and Antwerp rules, and that the custom is that the average statement is made up in conformity with the ships' insurance policy, and of course the goods have to conform to the statement once it is made up. If merchants preferred to fix this clause to York and Antwerp rules, shipowners would be agreeable to that.	Old clause remains.
"Weight, measure, quality, contents, and value unknown."	
NOTE.—"Weight and contents unknown" is printed on most sailing ships' Bills of Lading now, but being the *only* clause appended to the Bill of Lading, its inapplicability to any specific lot of goods would doubtless be at once noticed and the inapplicable words struck out.	Measure and quality struck out.
M.—With regard to this whole clause, and the exceptions "leakage, breakage," sweat, rust, and decay" in the second clause following, and "heat" in the first clause following, we have this strong objection, that although each of them separately may be perfectly applicable to certain goods, yet they are not all, or more than one or two of them, applicable to every class of goods. And inasmuch as every Bill of Lading is held to be a specific contract, the effect of leaving in at time of shipment clauses that were not intended to apply to the specific goods may quite well be that	

the inapplicable clauses will be pleaded in defence of some damage appearing at time of discharge, and from which the ship would never have been freed by the shipper, if she had attempted to clearly bargain for that exemption at time of shipment. Such would be a claim to be exempted for rust damage on cotton bales, on the ground that Bill of Lading was specifically a contract to deliver cotton bales in good order, damage by rust excepted. We have no objection to your writing in every Bill of Lading every one of these words that may be reasonably applicable to the specific goods, for that is an open challenge to us to consider and refuse or accept the exceptions you claim.

S.—As a matter of fact, we cannot get our captains to write in, in every case, the exceptions they should write. Moreover, such cases as you have named could only result from bad stowage, and no exception in a Bill of Lading can clear us from the consequences of bad stowage. Further, no reasonable shipowner would attempt to dispute a claim consequent on his having made unfair stowage for his own purposes.

M.—Your first answer amounts to this, that you cannot trust your servants to perform their duties; you must get servants who can perform such duties as this. As to the second answer, we are doubtful whether proof of bad stowage would secure our claims for damage; for instance, rust on cotton bales can only arise from bad stowage; if we make a contract with you to carry cotton bales in good order, rust excepted, might it not be held that we have deliberately contracted to take the risk of bad stowage? But suppose we were sure to get everything that could be proved to have arisen from bad stowage, your inapplicable clauses have still this very serious objection to us, that they throw the burden of proof on us. At present, if you deliver us cotton bales damaged by rust, the simple fact of their being damaged establishes our claim on you, unless you can prove that the damage

came through a peril of the sea. Under a Bill of Lading with "rust excepted," we would (even admitting your assumption about bad stowage not being covered to you) have to prove that the damage did come by bad stowage. We contend that, inasmuch as the stowage and care of the cargo is in the hands of your servants throughout, and away from our inspection, and consequently you alone have entire control of the proof necessary in such cases, it would be entirely unreasonable to throw the burden of proof on us, who would of course have the greatest difficulty in getting at proof where there was a desire on the shipowner's part to keep proof away from us. Your third answer does not meet the case. One does not make the wording of a contract looking only to what the other side, as liberal and fair men, would do on it; but we word it, as far as we can, to save us from any unintended interpretation that the law might allow any unreasonable man to put on it. Our difficulties with shipowners are not with the reasonable, but with the unreasonable, and we will not make a form of contract that may be held to cover an unreasonable position on the part of the shipowner.

S.—We fail to see that the inapplicable clauses can do you any harm, but we will never get to the end of it taking two or three clauses in a lump; let us discuss the clauses word by word.

M.—That will not settle the matter, as the exceptions must be considered as a whole as well as separately; but go on.

A long discussion was then gone into on the words of the first clause alone, little of which need be noted here, as it in no way altered the statements put forward above. The following is noted. When M. objected that "measure," for instance, was scarcely applicable to any Calcutta Bill of Lading, S. explained that they wanted the word in mainly to cover oils shipped from

Ceylon, and that they had no objection to alter the clause to "measure as applied "to liquids." To which M. replied that the same kind of limitation was needed for every one of these exceptions, which just amounted to saying that the Bill of Lading as proposed required such an amount of circumstantial limitation inserted as would make it an impracticable document.

At a subsequent meeting Mr. PARKS referred to cases in "Leggett" p.p. 220 to 223 to show that rust, &c., only applied to the rust arising from the goods themselves, and did not free the ship from consequential damages.

NOTE.—Leakage is the exception more particularly borne upon by these extracts from "Leggett." They just show, however, that the very fact of the word "leakage" being printed in a Bill of Lading for goods to which "leakage" was entirely inapplicable, was the sole cause of bringing the shipper in for the expense of a law-suit. Had the inapplicable word "leakage" not been printed in the Bill of Lading, the ship would have paid the piece-goods claim for damage by leakage from contiguous cargo without demur.

"*Pirates.*"

S.—Admit that by law they are already covered from pirates, but think it well to make known to ill-informed shippers what the ship is and is not liable for. Struck out.

M.—We object to having Bills of Lading hampered with unnecessary clauses, for reasons stated as so the *whole* Bill of Lading under quality marks' clause.

Subjects of Discussion and Notes by Sub-Committee of the Discussion.	Observations.
"*Robbers by land or sea (but not pilferage).*"	
M.—The law frees you in certain cases of robbery now. The exact meaning of the word "pilferage" is petty theft, so that in effect your proposed clause means that, in respect of robberies, for which the law at present holds you liable, you mean for the future to be liable only for those which come under the designation "petty theft," and not for those which are large enough to be outside of that definition?	Struck out.
S.—Yes; that is so.	
At a later meeting S. explained that they intend by this clause to make themselves liable for everything but robbery by superior force. M.'s solicitors, however, advise that it is doubtful whether the clause would be so construed.	
"*Loss or damage from heat.*"	
S.—There is certain cargo from Calcutta which in certain seasons heats on passage, although at time of shipment appearing to an experienced eye to be quite sound. The object of this exception is to free us from the consequences of such heat, which, it will be admitted, is beyond the power of our care to prevent.	Struck out, but "heat excepted may be inserted by the ship in Bill of Lading for produce to which that exception is reasonably applicable." The ship is not in any case to be excepted from heat caused by contiguous cargo.
M.—We have already stated that we have no objection to your inserting special exceptions in Bills of Lading for produce, to which they are clearly applicable. Heat for rapeseed might be a fair enough exception to bargain with the shipper, but we object to "heat" being printed in the Bill of Lading, lest it may be held that the exception applies not only to cargo, such as rapeseed, liable to heat, but also to cargo damaged from contiguity to heated stuff.	

S.—But our intention is to exempt ourselves, not only from damage to heated goods themselves, but from all damage to other goods in consequence of any part of the cargo having heated.

M.—So that, if a careless ship stows green rapeseed contiguous to cargo that will readily damage from heat, she is nevertheless to be free from the consequences.

S.—That would be bad stowage, and we maintain that no clause can free the ship from the consequences of bad stowage.

M.—But the burden of proof would be transferred from the ship to us, and the control of the proof is not in our hands. Probably, we would find that in nothing but a very glaring case could we make our claim good. Moreover, the tendency of your proposed exception is to take away the responsibility and care which properly lie on a shipmaster as to the assorting of his cargo. And, apart from all that, we are not prepared to exempt the ship from the consequences of heat from other cargo, of whose existence even the other shippers are ignorant.

"*Fire on board.*"

M.—Fire on board is specifically excepted by "The Merchant Shipping Act." We do not want the Bill of Lading filled up with unnecessary clauses.

S.—But we prefer them in, to give notice to all of what we are and are not liable for.

Subjects of Discussion and Notes by Sub-Committee of the Discussion.	Observations.
At a later meeting Mr. PARKS pointed out that the statute does not exempt the master (as distinguished from the owner), from loss by fire (Leggett, p. 184), and that the statute may not cover the ship from loss in craft or on shore. (Leggett, p.p 184-5).	
(Fire) "in hulk or craft or on shore."	
M.—It stands at present that if you put the stuff into proper hulk, craft or on shore, and do not do so except from necessities of the voyage, you are not liable for loss by fire there occurring.	These two clauses admitted.
S.—We are probably not liable, but we want to make quite certain of not being liable by giving this notice.	
See references to Leggett in previous clause.	
Jettison.	
M.—You are already clearly not liable for any proper jettison. We want the Bill of Lading free from unnecessary clauses.	Struck out.
Barratry.	
M.—Shipowners should be responsible for the proper choice of officers and crew. On this principle we think barratry should continue as it now is, a shipowners' risk.	Struck out.
MR. PARKS.—It is at present a merchant's underwriters' risk. Your policies at present cover barratry.	

Subjects of Discussion and Notes by Sub-Committee of the Discussion.	Oservations.
M.—Yes, they cover barratry to us, but reserving to the underwriters their back claim on you.	
Mr. Parks.—But your underwriters will not charge you one farthing extra insurance if you free us from barratry by Bill of Lading conditions.	
M.—But if it is right in principle that you should bear the risk of the conduct of your servants, it is no reason why you should be relieved of it that we can get another man to bear that risk without extra cost to us.	
Mr. Corry.—For my part, I would be willing to strike out the word.	
"*Any act, neglect, or default whatsoever of pilots, master, or crew in the navigation of the ship in the ordinary course of the voyage.*"	
M.—We understand this is the clause of all the proposals on which you put most weight. We understand that some recent decisions in law have thrown this burthen on you for the first time. We would like to know what these decisions are.	Allowed as a compromise.
S.—Previous to 1854 this risk of loss from neglect or default had lain on the underwriters, or at any rate the shipowner was not responsible for it; but just previous to 1854 certain decisions had thrown the whole responsibility, without limit, upon the shipowner. Then came "The Merchant Shipping Act, 1854," which limited the owner's liability to the value of his ship and freight. This limitation was again reduced in 1862 to £8 per register ton, with an extension to £15 per register ton in case of loss of life.	
M.—We had understood that some recent legal decision had just opened your eyes to some new burthen you had not previously known of, but this is a proposal	

to change what was laid down 26 years ago, and must have been very well known to shipowners ever since. Is it not the case that by clubs or some other method of insurance you cover yourselves from even this £8 to £15 per ton liability?

S.—The legislation we now propose to contract out of was virtually laid down in principle 26 years ago. We cannot insure out of our present liability except by clubs. We can, however, insure in the usual way for three-fourths of our liability by collision, but underwriters absolutely decline to relieve us of the whole of that risk. At our clubs we can mutually insure all of these liabilities that are otherwise uncovered.

M.—Presumably the reason why underwriters, like the legislature, decline to free shipowners from *all* liability for neglect and default, is that on principle they consider it wrong to relieve the shipowner from *all* the consequences of the neglects and defaults of his servants. It therefore amounts to this, that, apart from the matter of principle, you want to transfer the cost of covering these risks from yourselves to us. Your contribution to your clubs is just the same as our insurance, with this difference that your club contribution is a more or less uncertain amount.

S.—You will notice how strictly the clause we propose is limited. it is confined to "the navigation of the ship in the ordinary course of the voyage." You work now on many steamer Bills of Lading which except any act, neglect, or default whatsoever, either in navigation or management. Our proposal does not amount to a transference of the cost of the insurance of these risks from us to you. At present your underwriters have to lose all the consequences of neglect and default beyond the £8 per ton to which our liability is limited. The including of the 8£ per ton in their losses would make scarcely any appreciable difference to them, as £8 per register ton is but a small proportion of the value of a Calcutta cargo. And,

whether that be so or not, we are quite certain they will not charge you one farthing extra insurance to cover this new clause. We are finding our club contributions steadily getting heavier under this head; we presume, from people, who did not know before, gradually finding out that shipowners are liable under this head.

M.—Our insurance premiums would, however, ultimately be increased by the amount of this burthen, which you are now feeling through your clubs, for the rates of premium are ultimately fixed by the profitableness of the business. But to put that aside, we will take it that you propose to transfer the amount of your club contributions under this head to the shoulders of our underwriters. The clause you propose is, "any act, neglect, or default whatsoever" within the limits following. In the earlier part of our discussion, under another head, Mr. CORRY made use of the expression that you did not want to be freed from the consequences of gross neglect or default. Now the American courts will not (on principle) free the ship from gross neglect, even if "gross" is the exception in the Bill of Lading. It is difficult for us to foresee what troubles we might be putting our heads into by accepting a Bill of Lading for New York with a clause which is illegal in that port. Suppose we can see our way to meet you in this matter, what modification would you propose in this clause to exclude gross neglect and default from this exception?

S.—We do not see how that can be done. To use the words, "except gross neglect or default," would just be an invitation to litigation on every case arising.

M.—To come again to the principle involved. We dislike extremely, even with the limitations you have inserted, to free the shipowner from *all* responsibility

to us for the choice he may make in selecting officers and crew. There are many owners who, if freed from all responsibility on that score, would simply choose the cheapest men the Merchant Shipping Act allowed them to take, and we know what the consequences of that would be. Since this liability was first laid on the shipowners, in 1850 or thereabouts, your method of restricting your liability under it has been by the Merchant Shipping Act and its amendments. If the present liability of £8 per ton can be proved to be still too heavy on the shipowner, is not the proper method to move for a further reduction of liability by Act of Parliament?

S.—Well, we don't want to move in that direction at all.

"*The ship is not liable to the owners of the goods for,*"

These words were not referred to at all in the discussion. Their probable intention is to limit the exceptions of damage to the goods from which the cause of damage has arisen, but it seems doubtful whether they would have that effect. Struck out.

"*Insufficient packing,*"

M.—You are not now responsible for damage for insufficient packing when you can prove that the damage arises from insufficiency of the packages. Further, at time of shipment you are at liberty to reject any package that seems insufficient. But once having received a package, we contend you should remain responsible for its good delivery, except on production by you of proof of good cause to the contrary. Struck out.

"*Reasonable wear and tear of packages (cutting excepted),*"

M.—You are at present not liable for this when you can prove that the damage arises from reasonable wear and tear. The effect of inserting this clause Struck out.

Subjects of Discussion and Notes by Sub-Committee of the Discussion.	Observations.
would be to throw the burthen of proof of the contrary upon us, and to this we object, as the control of the proof is in the hands of your servants.	
"*For obliteration of marks or countermarks, numbers, address*" *(of goods shipped.)*	
M.—We have *to satisfy you* at time of shipment that the marks, &c., are sufficient for their purpose. Having accepted them as sufficient, we contend that you must deliver them so marked, or prove otherwise that the goods are ours.	Struck out.
"*Description of goods shipped,*"	
M.—This is an entirely unreasonable clause. Coupled with the obliteration clause it would mean a contention that we were to take whatever unidentifiable goods the ship might choose to tender us in lieu of short deliveries. The ship cannot be held liable for description so long as she delivers goods externally in accordance with the Bill of Lading.	Struck out.
"*Leakage, breakage, sweat, rust, decay.*"	
M.—Our objections to the clauses have been already sufficiently expressed under pages 3-6.	Struck out. The exceptions, leakage, breakage, sweat or decay may be inserted in the Bill of Lading for produce to which these exceptions are reasonably applicable, but the ship is not to be covered in these respects from damage by contiguous cargo.
"*Fines and expenses, and losses by detention of ship or cargo, caused by incomplete or incorrect description of contents or weight, or of any other particulars required by the authorities at the port of discharge, upon either the packages or Bills of Lading, shall be borne by the owners of the goods.*"	
M.—To what would this apply?	

Subjects of Discussion and Notes by Sub-Committee of the Discussion.	Observations.
S.—Suppose a ship were going to a Spanish or other port, where customs regulations as to minute descriptions are very stringent, detentions and fines are incurred thereby.	Struck out.
M.—But we are not discussing a Bill of Lading for a strange foreign port, but for ships on the berth in the regular Calcutta trades.	
S.—Then suppose a shipper sent home tobacco to London and called it something else, the ship might be seized.	
M.—That is an extremely unlikely case, and besides, you have only to show your innocence to have the ship immediately released again. You had better strike the clause out, it is only cumbering the Bill of Lading.	
"*The owners of this ship will not be accountable for gold, silver, bullion, specie, jewellery, precious stones, silk goods, quinine, or precious metals, or beyond the amount of one hundred pounds for any one package, or relatively for any portion thereof, unless shipment be made upon a special shipping order containing a declaration of the value, and the Bills of Lading are signed in accordance therewith.*"	
M.—You are already specifically excepted from all this by the Merchant Shipping Act (except the article quinine). It is only cumbering the Bill of Lading.	Struck out.
S.—Mr. CORRY would take it out.	
"*In case of the blockade or interdict of the port of discharge, or if the entering of or discharging in the port shall, on reasonable grounds, be considered by the master*	

unsafe by reason of war or disturbances, the master may land the goods at the nearest safe and convenient port at the expense and risk of the owners of the goods, and the ship's responsibility shall cease when the goods are so discharged into proper and safe keeping, the master giving immediate notice of the same to the consignees of the goods so far as they can be ascertained."

M.—How does this compare with the law as it now stands? Struck out.

S.—We believe it is exactly the law as it now stands, but we want it in the Bill of Lading to instruct our captains how to act in case of need.

M.—That is no sufficient reason for filling up the Bill of Lading with it. We are informed that as the law now stands the ship's responsibility does not cease where this clause would make it cease, but we are not advised where it does now cease.

S.—You had better ask your solicitor where it does now cease.

" *The master or agent shall have a lien on the goods, for freight and payments made or liabilities incurred in respect of any charges stipulated herein to be borne by the owners of such goods.*"

S.—You will notice that the extended lien applies only to charges stipulated herein to be borne. Struck out.

M.—This applies of course only to the clause "fines and expenses" (page 8) down to "of the goods." If that clause disappears, this one would also.

Subjects of Discussion and Notes by Sub-Committee of the Discussion.	Observations.
"*In the event of claim for short delivery, price to be the market price of the day at port of discharge on the day of the ship's reporting at the Custom House, less charges and brokerage.*"	
M.—We understand that to be the established custom; it is unnecessary to burden the Bill of Lading with it.	Allowed.
S.—It is so often disputed that, if you agree to it as fair, it will have to be printed in the Bill of Lading.	

London, 29th April, 1881.

DEAR SIRS,

The Bengal Chamber of Commerce having authorized Messrs. J. N. Bullen, E. A. Mavrogordato, P. J. Nicolas, H. Reinhold, W. McFarlane and myself, as a Committee, to arrange with a Committee of Shipowners, a Bill of Lading for Sailing Ships homeward from Calcutta, I beg to advise you that we have agreed with the Shipowners that the form enclosed herewith shall come into general use in Calcutta on 1st July next.

We have agreed with the shipowners that any of the further exceptions, heat, leakage, breakage, sweat or decay, may be inserted in the document, but only in Bills of Lading for produce to which the exceptions proposed are reasonably applicable; *e.g.* leakage in Bill of Lading for liquids.

To prevent unauthorized alterations in the document, such as some steam shipowners are constantly slipping into steamer Bill of Lading, it is arranged that the forms for general use are to be such only as bear on the face of them that they are printed and issued by or for the Bengal Chamber of Commerce. Further, certified copies of the form now arranged will lie with the Shipowners' Association in London, and the Bengal Chamber of Commerce in Calcutta.

The words "without discount," in the freight payment clause, do away with the two months' interest from ships reporting, at present allowed to consignees, on prepayments of sailing ships' freight, but they do not allow the shipowner to charge interest from ships reporting or from ships unloading on freights not paid till later delivery is taken. As against this concession to the shipowner we would have

liked to insert as an agreement in the Bill of Lading, the present custom of allowing the consignee to take away the goods from ship's side on paying 90 @ 95 per cent. of the estimated freight, he holding the balance as a security for and until the ascertainment of full delivery in good order and condition. We felt, however, that the shipowners' objection that this would bind them to deliver without full freight, even to people whose solvency they had good reason to doubt, was fatal to any definite agreement in the Bill of Lading to this effect. We had therefore to be content with the words "but otherwise subject to the customary mode of payment," the understanding with the shipowners being, that the release on payment of 90 @ 95 per cent. of estimated freight (the percentages are their own proposal) is to apply to all goods. The Committee hope that every consignee will insist on this right to hold this small balance of freight and so permanently establish this, to the consignee, very valuable custom.

It will be necessary to take care that these new Bill of Lading terms are quite covered by your Marine Insurance Policies from the date they come into force.

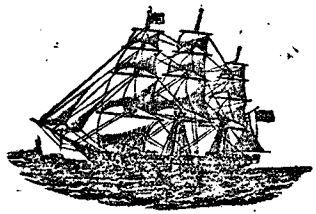
In sending you this circular I am presuming that you are conversant with the several stages of this Bill of Lading controversy and with the very large demands originally put forward by the shipowners.

I am, Dear Sirs,

Yours respectfully,

F. W. HEILGERS,

Chairman.



SAILING SHIP BILL OF LADING—CALCUTTA TO UNITED KINGDOM.

Shipped in good order and condition, by

on board the Ship whereof is Master for this present
voyage lying in the Port of
and bound for

being marked and numbered as per margin,

If quality marks are used, they are to be of the same size as the leading marks and contiguous thereto; and if such quality marks are inserted in the Shipping Notes, and the goods are accepted by the Mate, Bills of Lading in conformity therewith shall be signed by the Captain, and the Ship shall be responsible for the correct delivery of the goods.

and to be delivered in the like good order and condition at the aforesaid Port of

(The Act of God; the Queen's enemies; loss or damage from fire on board, in hulk or craft, or on shore; any act, neglect, or default whatsoever, of Pilots, Master, or Crew in the navigation of the Ship in the ordinary course of the voyage; and all and every the dangers and accidents of the seas and rivers, and of navigation of whatever nature or kind, excepted.)

unto
or to his or their Assigns. Freight to be paid for the said goods at the rate of

without discount, but otherwise subject to the customary mode of payment. Average as accustomed. In the event of claim for short delivery, price to be the market price of the day at port of discharge on the day of the Ship's reporting at the Custom House, less charges and brokerage.

Weight, contents, and value unknown.

IN WITNESS whereof the Master or Agent of the said Ship has signed Bills of Lading, exclusive of the Master's copy, all of this tenor and date, one of which being accomplished, the others to stand void.

Dated at Calcutta_____188

EXECUTION IN NATIVE STATES OF DECREES BY BRITISH COURTS.

This important matter has again been brought to the notice of Government, but the Committee regret that it has not advanced beyond the stage already reported.

From Government of India to Chamber.

No. 181. *I. J. Simla, the* 1*st November* 1880.

I am desired to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 26th June last, on the subject of the enforcement of the decrees of Civil Tribunals obtained by British subjects in British India against debtors who abscond to Native States.

2. The Government of India regret the delay that has occurred in acknowledging your letter, but I am to explain that the proposals made by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce are receiving the careful consideration of the Government of India.

LOADING AND VENTILATION OF GRAIN VESSELS.

The loss of the ship "Essex" whilst homeward bound from Bassein with a cargo of rice induced the Secretary of State for India to enquire what steps the Government of India con-

sidered desirable in order to remedy certain evils complained of in the existing system of loading and ventilation of vessels, and the Government of Bengal invited an expression of the Committee's opinion on these points.

The Committee thought that it had not been shown that the vessel was overladen or badly stowed or improperly ventilated, and as regards the loading and ventilation of vessels generally the Committee considered that the provisions of the law were already ample, and that all further interference by Government was to be deprecated.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.

No. 1594,—*Calcutta, the* 15*th December* 1880.

In forwarding herewith a copy of a Notification of the Government of India, Department of Finance and Commerce, No. 3691, of 20th November 1880, I am directed to request that you will be so good as to favor the Lieutenant-Governor with an expression of the views of the Chamber on the existing system of loading and ventilating grain vessels, and on the steps which should be taken to remedy the evils complained of.

NOTIFICATION.

Simla, the 20th November 1880.

Read the following despatch:—

From the Secretary of State for India, to the Government of India, No. 144 *(Statistics and Commerce) dated 7th October* 1880.

In continuation of the despatch of the 14th March 1878, No. 48, I forward herewith, for your consideration, a copy of a letter* from the Board of Trade, enclosing the report of the investigation into the supposed loss of the *Essex* whilst on a voyage from Bassein to Queenstown with a cargo of rice. I desire that, in compliance with the request of the Board, you will cause every publicity to be given to these papers, and will inform me whether any and what steps Your Excellency considers should be taken to remedy the evils complained of in regard to the existing system of lading and ventilating grain vessels.

* Dated 1st September 1880, and enclosures.

From T. H. FARRER, ESQ., *Secretary to the Board of Trade, London, to the Under-Secretary of State for India, Dated 1st September* 1880.

With reference to the letter from this Department of the 23rd February 1878, upon the subject of the casualties occurring to vessels Engaged in the Eastern grain trade, I am directed by the Board of Trade to transmit to you, to be laid before the Marquis of Hartington, a copy of the report of the formal investigation recently held at

Westminster into the circumstances attending the supposed loss of the sailing ship *Essex*, whilst on a voyage from Bassein to Queenstown with a cargo of rice.

The Board of Trade would invite His Lordship's attention to the remarks made in this report respecting the improper stowage of the rice and the extreme haste with which these vessels are sometimes laden. The Board also desire to call attention to the observations upon the subject of the ventilation of the vessel. They are advised that box ventilators, as at present used, are not sufficient in strength; and although that mode of ventilation would appear to be better than the space system, which is condemned in the report, it would seem that the lateral strength of the box ventilator requires to be largely increased.

The Board of Trade would suggest therefore, for Lord Hartington's consideration, that this matter should be brought to the notice of the Indian Government, and that they should be asked to give these papers publicity, so as to warn shipowners, shippers, and underwriters of the dangers of the present practice, and also to consider whether any and what other steps can be taken to remedy this evil.

In the matter of the formal investigation held at Westminster, on the 30th and 31st of July 1880, before H. C. Rothery, Esq., Wreck Commissioner, assisted by Captain Forster and Captain Castle, as Assessors, into the circumstances attending the supposed loss of the sailing ship *Essex* of London, whilst on a voyage from Bassein to Queenstown.

Report of Court.

The Court, having carefully inquired into the circumstances of the above-mentioned shipping casualty, finds for the reasons annexed,—

1. That when the *Essex* left Bassein, she was, so far as then appeared, in good and seaworthy condition.

2. That she had too great a quantity of cargo on board, having regard to the fact that she was about to round the Cape of Good Hope in the depth of winter; but that there is nothing to show that, as laden, she had not sufficient stability.

3. That the leak which was discovered on the 7th of May was repaired as well as under the circumstances it could be.

4. That the cargo was not properly stowed, and that the system of forming ventilating tunnels with the bags of rice without any support to the sides, is not a proper or a safe system.

5. That the bags, or at least every alternate tier, should be stowed athwartships or a-burton, rather than fore and aft, or as longers.

6. That we have no means of knowing whether the box ventilators used in the case of other rice-laden vessels are or are not of sufficient strength to resist the pressure put upon them in the event of the vessel encountering heavy weather, but that they are undoubtedly better and less liable to collapse, and so set the cargo in motion, than ventilating tunnels without any supports to the sides.

7. That although the bags of rice, if not filled quite so full, might lie closer and be less liable to shift, there is no reason why, if stowed a-burton, they should not be capable of efficient stowage.

8. That in the opinion of the Court the loss of the vessel is probably due to the quantity of cargo which she had on board, and to the mode in which it was stowed.

The Court makes no order as to costs.

H. C. ROTHERY,
Wreck Commissioner.

Dated this 31*st day of July* 1880.

We concur in the above report.

G. H. FORSTER,
J. S. CASTLE,
Assessors.

Annex to the Report.

This case was heard at Westminster, on the 30th and 31st of July 1888, when Mr. Middleton appeared for the Board of Trade, and Mr. Aspinall for the owners of the *Essex*. Eight witnesses having been produced by the Board of Trade and examined, and the depositions of four witnesses taken at Bassein having been put in and read, Mr. Middleton asked the opinion of the Court upon the following questions :—

"1. Whether, when the *Essex* left Bassein, she was in good and seaworthy condition?

"2. Whether she was overladen, and whether, as laden, she had sufficient stability?

"3. Whether the leak discovered on the 7th of May was properly repaired?

"4. Whether the cargo was properly stowed, and whether the system of forming ventilators, as adopted in the case of the *Essex*, is a safe and proper one?

"5. Whether the bags should not be stowed a-burton, or at least every other tier a-burton, rather than in longers?

"6. Whether the box ventilators, as used in the case of other rice-laden vessels, are of sufficient strength to withstand the pressure put upon them in the event of the vessel encountering heavy weather, and whether in that event they are not liable to collapse, and so set in motion the entire cargo?

"7. Whether the bags as filled at Bassein are capable of efficient stowage, or whether they should not rather be slack?

"8. What in the opinion of the Court, from the evidence before them, is the cause of this vessel not having been heard of since she was spoken by the *Eastminster* on the 22nd of May 1879?"

Mr. Aspinall having then addressed the Court on behalf of the owners, and Mr. Middleton having been heard in reply, the Court proceeded to give judgment on the questions on which its opinion had been asked. The circumstances of the case are as follows:—

The *Essex*, which was a wooden sailing ship belonging to the port of London, of 1,255 tons register, was built at Sunderland in the year 1863, and at the time of her loss was the property of Messieurs George and Walter Gore Marshall, of No. 5, Philpot Lane, in the City of London, shipowners, Mr. George Marshall being the managing owner. On the 28th of April 1879, she cleared from Bassein, in Burmah, with a cargo of 1,679 tons of rice, and a crew consisting of 24 hands and 1 apprentice; and after lying in the stream for two days waiting for a tug, she proceeded on the 30th on her voyage, bound to Queenstown for orders. On the 10th of May following she was fallen in with by the *Amana*, a vessel which had also been loading rice at Bassein, and which had sailed on the 2nd of that month. Captain Beckett of the *Amana* told us that on sighting her she had a flag flying, stating that they were in want of immediate assistance; he accordingly went on board her, taking with him his carpenter and four of his hands, and was then informed by the captain of the *Essex* that his vessel had sprung a leak on the 7th, and that they had since shifted a quantity of the cargo forward, so as to get the leak out of water. And the weather being fine, and the sea perfectly smooth, they had rigged a platform over the stern, and had torn off some of the copper to endeavour to find out where the leak was. On going below the carpenters found the water coming in near the stern post, but where exactly they could not ascertain; they accordingly replaced the copper on the outside, and caulked her as best they could on the inside, so as to prevent the water from coming in. After this Captain Beckett returned with his men to his own ship, but agreed to remain by

her during the night. By the following morning at 10 o'clock the captain of the *Essex* reported that it was all right, and that the whole of the cargo had been replaced; the two vessels, however, remained in company until the 14th, when they parted, and Captain Beckett saw no more of her. She was, however, subsequently fallen in with on the 22nd of the same month, in latitude 3° south, and longitude 93° east, by the *Eastminster*, with whom she exchanged signals; but at that time all seemed to be right with her. From that time the *Essex* has not been heard of, and the object of the present inquiry is to ascertain, if possible, what is the cause of her disappearance.

Now the first question upon which our opinion has been asked is, "Whether when the *Essex* left Bassein she was in a good and seaworthy condition." It seems that the *Essex* was originally built in the year 1863 by Messrs, Marshall, her owners, and that she remained in their possession from that time until her loss. She was undoubtedly a first class vessel, having been built chiefly of English oak and teak, and was originally classed A1 for 13 years at Lloyd's. She seems to have been always very well kept up, and in the year 1875 I find her reported upon by Lloyd's as follows:—"This vessel has been specially surveyed with a view to improve the class, and is recommended for an additional year under the mixed material rule. The main keelson and a portion of the stern and stern post apron and dead wood are of teak, 14 years material. The waterways, plank sheers, sheer strakes, top sides, wales, the remaining outside planking to below the light line, are of teak, 14 years material.

The deck beams are of iron, 14 years. The remaining materials are of 12 years grade and above. This ship is well fastened, having 14 pairs of rider knees extending over the bilges, and the workmanship is stated to be very superior. It is respectfully submitted that this appears to be a case for the favourable consideration of the committee for an additional year, as recommended, namely 12 years under Table A, one year under the mixed material rule, one year for yellow metal fastenings." She was accordingly classed A1 for 14 years from 1863, the year in which she was built. In 1877, when her time expired, she was at Calcutta; but upon her return to this country she was placed in Messrs. Fletcher and Company's docks at Limehouse, and there apparently underwent a thorough repair at an expense of 1,600*l.*; after which she was continued on her original class for a further period of 9 years from 1877. She then left with a cargo of iron and creosoted sleepers (and apparently not very deeply laden) for Bombay, and having there discharged her cargo, she proceeded in ballast to Bassein, where she took in her cargo of rice. It does not appear that she suffered any damage on the way out, and there was therefore nothing, so far as we can see to lead the master and those concerned in sending her to sea, to suppose that she was not, when she left Bassein, in a thoroughly good and seaworthy condition.

The next question upon which our opinion has been asked is, "Whether she was overladen, and whether as laden she had sufficient stability?" It seems that she had a cargo of 1,679 tons of rice, contained in 17,500 bags,

being about 31 or 32 per cent. above her registered tonnage, which may, at first sight, appear not to be too great. It is, however, to be observed, that she had, we are told by the owner, 120 tons more on board than on the previous occasion of her taking rice from a Burman port; and it may be well therefore to see what was the amount of her freeboard on this occasion.

According to the pilot who took her down the river, her draught aft was 21 feet 8 inches, but he could not tell us either her draught forward, or the amount of her freeboard. So also the Custom House officer at Bassein tells us that she drew 21 feet 8 inches aft, but he did not know what was her draught forward, or her freeboard. The owner, however, produced a letter from the master, written as he was on the point of leaving Bassein, and in which he states that she drew 21 feet 8 inches aft, and 21 feet 4 forward, giving a mean of 21 feet 6. This, taken in connection with the depositions of the pilot and the Custom House officer, leaves no doubt that her draught on leaving Bassein was 21 feet 6. Let us see then what amount of freeboard this would give her.

The owner brought in a statement, which had been compiled by Mr. Martell from the particulars furnished to Lloyd's when she was classed, shewing her total depth at the side to have been 26 feet and a quarter of an inch which, with a draught of 21 feet 6 inches, would give her a freeboard of 4 feet 6¼. It appears, however, from the records of the Custom House in this country, that on leaving London the load-line was at 4 feet 10 inches below the deck; and, as it may fairly be assumed that it was

not altered during the voyage, she would with a freeboard of only 4 feet 6¼ inches have had the load-line nearly 4 inches below the surface of the water. We must add however, from 4 to 5 inches on passing from fresh to salt water, so that we may assume her freeboard when she got to sea, to have been about 4 feet 11 inches. Now a freeboard of 4 feet 11 on a depth of hold of 23·4 feet, gives as nearly as possible 2½ inches to every foot of hold; and this, according to Mr. Sampson, one of the engineer surveyors to the Board of Trade, would be sufficient; but then Mr. Sampson can hardly be regarded as an authority, seeing that it is no part of his duty to say what amount of freeboard a vessel should have, and that, although he had formerly been to sea, it was only as an engineer. On the other hand, the assessors are of opinion, seeing that she had to come round the Cape in mid-winter, when in all probability she would encounter very tempestuous weather, that 2½ inches to the foot was not sufficient, and that she ought not to have had less than about 2·8 or 3 inches of freeboard for every foot of hold, or from 5 feet 6 to 5 feet 10. This is apparently the freeboard which she had on the previous occasion, when she carried 120 tons less cargo, 12 tons being required to sink her about 1 inch. Whilst, then, we are of opinion that the vessel on leaving Bassein was too heavily laden, we are at the same time anxious to acquit the owner, Mr. Marshall, of all blame in connection therewith. He seems to have left it, as he naturally would do, to the Captain and to Messrs. Bullock, the shippers, and the responsibility, therefore, must rest with them. As to whether, "as laden, she had sufficient stability," we can only say that we have no reason to think that she had not; rice being a heavy cargo, which

would tend to lower the centre of gravity, which would, of course, increase her stability.

The third question upon which our opinion has been asked is "Whether the leak discovered on the 7th of May was properly repaired." No doubt, they did the best they could under the circumstances, but it must be remembered that they were in the open sea, and that they could hardly have done it so well or so effectually as if they had been in port. It is possible that if they afterwards encountered bad weather, the packing or stuffing by which they had stopped the leak might have come out and so endangered the safety of the vessel; but they did the best they could, and we have no reason to think that the master, or any one connected with the vessel, had any idea, when they left Bassein, that she would be likely to spring a leak.

The fourth question upon which our opinion has been asked is, "Whether the cargo was properly stowed, and whether the system of forming ventilators, such as was adopted in the case of the *Essex*, is a safe and proper one." This, which is the most important question in the case, must be considered under the several heads into which it necessarily divides itself.

And first as regards the preparation of the hold. Mr. Batson, an assistant in the Firm of Messieurs Bullock Brothers and Co. of Bassein, under whose superintendence the cargo appears to have been shipped, tells us that "the hold was prepared for the reception of the cargo thus:—from the foremast to the mizenmast a substantial platform was laid from the turn of the bilge to the top of the keelson, which, at its highest point, might have been

20 to 24 inches high. On other portions of the ceiling, ordinary dunnage wood was laid to a level with the top of the keelson. From the turn of the bilge to the 'tween decks, and thence to the main deck, the sides were covered with crossed bamboos. Over all dunnage mats were placed."

There were also double rows of shifting boards, $\frac{7}{8}$ths to 1 inch in thickness, extending from the keelson through the 'tween decks to the upper deck. In the lower holds the shifting boards were nailed securely to each side of the wooden stanchions; but in the 'tween decks, where the stanchions were of iron, the shifting boards were secured to them by strands of rope, but they were not shored off at the sides. The system is, perhaps, not so secure as where there are double rows of stanchions, and the shifting boards are passed between; but we are told that it was sufficiently secure, the whole of the cargo being in bags; and we have the fact before us that although the cargo of the *Amana*, which was stowed in exactly the same way as that of the *Essex*, shifted, as we shall presently see, in the course of the voyage, the shifting boards remained perfectly firm. So far, therefore, as the preparation of the hold for the reception of the cargo, the dunnage, and the shifting boards, we have no reason to suppose that the cargo was not properly stowed.

Secondly, as regards the ventilation. It seems that formerly, when rice used to be more generally hand-dried, and was in consequence much drier, the bags of rice used to be packed quite tight in the hold, trodden down and beaten with mallets, so as to form almost a solid mass; there was then no settlement, no vacant spaces in the

hold, and consequently no chance of the cargo shifting on the voyage. When, however, the export from Burmah became so important, it was found necessary, owing to the extreme dampness of the atmosphere and the uncleaned condition of the rice, to provide means of ventilation in the cargo to prevent it becoming damp and discoloured on the voyage. With this view two modes seem to have been generally adopted, the box ventilator system, and Heap's, or the space system, as it is called. According to Mr. McWhinnie, who was formerly a master mariner, but is now the Marine Superintendent to Messrs. Bullock's firm in this country, and who superintends the discharge of their rice cargoes on arrival, the box ventilator system used to be adopted by them from 1873 to 1877; but from 1877 to the present time they have more generally followed the Heap's or space system. In both systems ventilating tunnels are constructed, running fore and aft through the cargo, midway between the shifting boards and the sides of the ship, and terminating either in an open space or in a shaft at each end, so that a free current of air is thus made to pass through the cargo, which carries off the heat and moisture. But the essential distinction between the two is that in the box ventilator system the sides of the tunnels are formed of two boards held together by pieces of wood nailed to the top and bottom, thus forming a tunnel about 7½ inches deep by 8½ inches wide; whereas in the Heap's or space system, the sides of the tunnels are formed of the bags themselves, placed fore and aft, or as longers, leaving an empty space, about a foot wide, which forms the ventilating tunnel, and over which, at intervals of about a foot, are placed battens, on which other bags are laid as longers.

Now Mr. McWhinnie, who seems to have been the author of this last system, has given us five reasons why in his opinion, the space, or Heap's, system, is better than the box ventilator system. His first reason is, that the box system entails some additional expense in the making of the boxes, which may be admitted. The second is, that the box system prevents them from carrying as much cargo by about 10 tons; but this is not quite so clear, seeing that the box ventilators are only $7\frac{1}{2}$ by $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches, whereas we are told that the empty spaces left by the other system are about a foot wide. There is, however, no doubt the additional weight of the boxes, but which would not be very considerable. A third objection is, that the boxes were liable to tear the bags, and thus let out the rice; but on being pressed, Mr. McWhinnie was obliged to admit that it was only in the event of the boxes collapsing that he had found the bags to be torn. A fourth objection was, that the ventilation was not so complete with the box ventilator system; but he was obliged to admit that he had never known of a cargo having been injured from want of ventilation, unless the box ventilators had collapsed, and when the fore and aft tunnels had free communication with the open air by an up and down shaft. His fifth objection was, that the box ventilators were more liable to collapse: but he was quite unable to tell us why the tunnels were more likely to give way when the sides were supported by strong boxes, than when they had no supports at all; and it is clear that the pressure which would be required to break in the boxes would be more than sufficient to cause the bags to fall into and stop up the ventilating tunnels, if the sides were not supported. It comes therefore to this, that the only real objection to

the box ventilator system was the cost of making the boxes, and possibly also that, if they had to fit in the boxes, they might not be able to load the cargo quite so quickly; but these are objections which ought not for one moment to weigh against safety to human life. Notwithstanding then Mr. McWhinnie's objections, we think that the box system is much better and much safer than the system adopted in the case of the *Essex*, which was the Heap's, or space, system; that, too, there is danger of the tunnels collapsing, and of the cargo shifting under the latter system, is clear from what occurred to the *Amana* after she had parted from the *Essex*. It seems that on the 2nd of July, when off Plattenberg Bay, the vessel was caught in a heavy gale of wind, took a sudden lurch to starboard, and shifted her cargo. She lay with her gunwale under water for 36 hours, but on the storm abating they got her in under the shelter of the land, and on opening the hatches found that the whole of the cargo in the tween decks, which had been stowed in the same way as that of the *Essex*, had shifted over to starboard, and that all the ventilating tunnels had been obliterated. Captain Beckett told us that the cargo had shifted to such an extent that he could get along the port side from end to end of the vessel, and that in some places the deck itself was exposed. In the lower holds also the upper part of the cargo had shifted, but not to so great an extent. After a time they succeeded in re-stowing the cargo, but without, of course, leaving any empty spaces or ventilating tunnels; and having righted the vessel, they were able to complete the voyage in safety. In our opinion, therefore, the system adopted in the *Essex*, of forming ventilating tunnels with the bags of rice alone, and with-

out any supports to the sides, is not a safe or proper one, and that the box ventilator system is much better.

The next question upon which our opinion has been asked is, "Whether the bags should not be stowed a-burton, or, at least, every other tier a-burton, rather than in longers?" Rice bags, especially such as are shipped at Bassein, which are very full and round; are, it is obvious, much more likely to shift by the rolling of the ship if stowed fore and aft, or in longers, than if stowed athwartships or a-burton; the more so, if it is necessary to leave any empty spaces for ventilation, as was done in the cases of the *Essex* and the *Amana*. We think, therefore, that there can be no doubt that it would be better that the bags should be stowed a-burton, which is the mode recommended by the authorities in the North American ports as that which long experience has shewn them to be most conducive to the safety of life and property.

The sixth question upon which our opinion has been asked is, "Whether the box ventilators, as used in the case of other rice-laden vessels, are of sufficient strength to withstand the pressure put upon them in the event of the vessel encountering heavy weather, and whether in that event they are not liable to collapse, and so set in motion the entire cargo?" What is the strength of the box ventilators which are usually employed in rice vessels we do not know; but if they are of the same construction and strength as those tested by Mr. Kirkaldy, they would appear to be capable of bearing a pressure, applied vertically, of 46,935 lbs., applied laterally, of 1,882 lbs., and applied diagonally, of only 329 lbs. No doubt, a force of only 329 lbs. appears at first sight to be hardly sufficient

to resist the pressure of bags of rice which weigh about 2 cwts. each, and Mr. Sampson has suggested that the boxes might be considerably strengthened by pieces of board placed at short intervals across the tunnel, and securely nailed to the sides, the transverse pieces filling up the whole of the tunnel, but being pierced with holes to allow the air to pass. But the objection to this plan seems to be that, unless the tunnel was considerably enlarged, the passage of the air would be greatly impeded; and it appears to us that the additional strength required would be equally well obtained by bars placed in the direction of the diagonal of a section of the tunnel, and securely nailed to the sides at each end, in addition to the cross pieces already existing at top and bottom; or it might be done, as suggested by Mr. Sampson, by making the cross pieces wider and stronger, and securing them to the sides by three nails instead of only one as at present. But whether such additional strength is required or not, it is clear that, even with the present boxes, the ventilating tunnels are not so liable to collapse and to set in motion the cargo as if there were no boxes at all.

The seventh question upon which our opinion has been asked is, "Whether the bags as filled at Bassein are capable of efficient stowage, or whether they should not rather be slacker?" No doubt, if the bags had been somewhat slacker, as we are told they generally are at Calcutta, they would have fitted closer together, and have been less liable to shift; but there is no evidence before us that they were not capable of efficient stowage had they been stowed, as they should have been, a-burton.

The last point upon which our opinion has been asked

is, "What, in the opinion of the Court, from the evidence before it, is the cause of the vessel not having been heard of since she was spoken by the *Eastminster?*" Various circumstances have, in our opinion, contributed to this disaster. In the first place, the vessel, although in herself a first class vessel and thoroughly well built, was more deeply laden than she should have been. In the next place, the ventilating tunnels with which the vessel was fitted, owing to their sides being wholly unsupported, were not unlikely to collapse, as those of the *Amana* did, and the cargo to shift, which would be a source of very great danger to the vessel, loaded as she was. Thirdly, the leak, which had only been temporarily stopped from the inside, might very well have broken out again when the vessel got into heavy weather. Lastly, the cargo appears to have been loaded with excessive haste. Mr. McWhinnie told us that the most common cause of the foundering of these rice vessels was, in his opinion, the extreme haste with which they were sometimes laden; and he told us that sometimes as many as 3,000 bags were put on board in one day, and that it would be quite impossible to stow properly so large a number in the time. When, however, we turn to the certificate of the Custom House officer at Bassein, we find that the vessel arrived there on the 12th of April, and had completed her cargo and cleared out by the 28th, and that on two days, the 26th and 27th, she loaded 4,100 and 3,350 bags respectively, a quantity which, according to Mr. McWhinnie, could not have been properly stowed in the time.

It seems that this was Captain Barrett's first command, and it is, therefore, not improbable that he might have been anxious to shew what a large quantity of cargo he

could take, and how quickly he could ship it; hence, apparently, the reason of her having had 120 tons more cargo than on the previous occasion, and of the extreme rapidity with which it was shipped. Indeed, I am told by the assessors that it is a well-known fact at Lloyd's that a very large proportion of losses take place with captains on their first voyages, when they are anxious to shew their smartness and eagerness for the interests of their owners, and have not yet acquired the necessary caution which experience gives. It is, therefore, to the master, and to the shippers, Messrs. Bullock, of Bassein, that the blame for the amount of the cargo put on board, and for the mode in which it was stowed, is to be attributed, and not to Mr. Marshall, the owner.

No application was made by the Board of Trade for costs, and an application on behalf of the owner for his costs was refused, it being, in the opinion of the Court, a very proper case for an inquiry.

Since the hearing, I have received a letter from Mr. Marshall, the owner, in which he informs me that, in the estimate given in of the depth of the vessel to the top of deck at side, Mr. Martell had made a mistake of 5 inches, by not allowing for the false keel, and that this would make the total depth at side 26 feet 5¼ inches, which, with a draught of 21 feet 6 inches, would give a freeboard of 4 feet 11¼ inches on leaving Bassein, and of about 5 feet 4 inches when she got out to sea. The mistake is, no doubt, very greatly to be regretted, but the Court could only decide the case upon the evidence before it. We were told at the hearing that the estimate of the vessel's side had been made by the able and accom-

plished chief surveyor to Lloyd's, Mr. Martell, from records of the vessel in their possession; and the calculations were, at my request, checked by the owner and by another of Lloyd's surveyors then in Court, so that it might have been thought that we could hardly have had better evidence. Had we, however, known at the time that her freeboard, when she got to sea, was 5 feet 4 inches instead of only 4 feet 11, it would have made some difference in the opinion which we formed that the vessel was overladen; but, as I have already said, we were bound to decide the case on the evidence before us.

H. C. ROTHERY,
Wreck Commissioner.

We concur,

G. H. FORSTER,
J. S. CASTLE,
Assessors.

ORDERED, that the papers read be published in the *Gazette of India.*

ORDERED also, that the papers be forwarded to the Governments of Madras, Bombay and Bengal, and to the Chief Commissioner of British Burmah, with the request that the Government of India may be furnished with a report on the existing system of lading and ventilating grain vessels, and on the steps which should be taken to remedy the evils complained of.

R. B. CHAPMAN,
Secretary to the Govt. of India.

From Chamber to the Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, the 20th January 1881.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1594, of the 15th ultimo, forwarding a Notification of the Government of India relative to the system of loading and ventilating grain vessels, and with special reference to the circumstances attending the supposed loss of the sailing ship *Essex*, whilst on a voyage from Bassein to Queenstown with a cargo of rice, and the finding of the Court which formally investigated the case.

Having carefully perused the report placed at their disposal regarding the *Essex*, the Committee are of opinion that it is not shown that the stowage of the cargo had anything to do with the loss of the vessel. There was a serious leak in the neighbourhood of the stern-post, but where exactly, it could not be ascertained, so the carpenters calked her as best they could on the inside, and having replaced, as well as they could, the copper which they had torn off, the vessel continued her voyage. It is quite clear that they had no assurance whatever that the mischief had been stopped. They had not even found out where the leak was, and it needs little technical knowledge to see that to keep water out of a vessel the calking should be done from the outside The facts being so, the Committee do not see what need there is to search further for the cause of loss.

As regards the allegation of overloading, the Committee see nothing in the evidence to support it. The *Essex* had but 32 per cent. over register, and had a side of 5 feet 4

inches in salt water, being 2·72 inches to the foot, so that the margin of displacement was more than is usually thought sufficient.

There is nothing stated to support the theory that the *Essex* was loaded with perilous rapidity. In point of fact she was 15 clear days in port and took away 17,500 bags, so that the average speed in loading was not 1,200 bags daily; whereas a good stevedore can certainly stow more than double the quantity with efficiency. The Committee notice that on the last two days the ship took in 4,100 and 3,350 bags respectively, but when filling up, they can see little extraordinary, and certainly nothing dangerous, in this.

The system of ventilating rice cargoes by leaving spaces may easily, under certain circumstances, be productive of danger, and undoubtedly the more solid cargoes are stowed, the less risk there is to the lives of those who navigate the vessels carrying them: at the same time it must not be forgotten that the trade depends upon the delivery of the cargo in good order, and that therefore some system of ventilation is absolutely necessary.

With Calcutta rice no extraordinary ventilating arrangements are necessary; with Rangoon rice, doubtless, it is different; but as to the precise methods which should be adopted in vessels sailing from Burmah ports; the merchants trading thence are best qualified to advise.

Looking generally at the whole question, the Committee would deprecate Government interference. As the load-line of ships is already regulated and a law exists for the survey of doubtful vessels, the Committee are of opinion

that merchants, shipowners, shipmasters, and underwriters may safely be left to work out amongst themselves the best modes of stowage and ventilation.

EMPLOYMENT AND PAY OF LEADSMEN.

It will be seen from the following correspondence that, on the recommendation of the Port Officer, the Lieutenant-Governor has introduced a rule directing the levy of lead-money from all vessels to which leadsmen may be appointed, and that such charge shall be 16 Rupees instead of the former rate of 25 Rupees. The Committee concurred in this order, which came into force from the 1st April 1881.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber
No. 14. *Calcutta, the 5th January* 1881.

The Port Officer has brought to the notice of Government the fact that leadsmen apprentices have, in common with pilots, been hitherto in the habit of accepting gratuities from ships. The Lieutenant-Governor has now issued stringent orders against the continuance of this irregular and unauthorized practice, and any leadsman hereafter found to have violated these orders will meet with severe punishment.

2. The Port Officer in reporting this matter has suggested a modification of the present system of levying lead-money from the shipping. The Chamber is perhaps

aware that, according to a custom long observed in this Port, lead-money is charged only to foreign ships and outward bound British vessels which take a pilot on application, and that inward and outward bound British vessels taking the pilot of the turn are never charged, although leadsmen may be actually appointed to them. The reasons which might have been deemed sufficient originally to justify this distinction between certain vessels and the rest of the shipping cannot now be ascertained, but there seems to be no ground whatever at the present day for not treating all vessels alike in respect of the charge for lead-money. The Lieutenant-Governor is, therefore, disposed to introduce a new rule, directing the levy of lead-money from all vessels to which leadsmen are appointed; but he would be willing at the same time to reduce the present fee of Rs. 25 on each vessel to, say, Rs. 16, so as not to make any material addition to the gross charge on the shipping of the Port. I am to request that the Chamber may be so good as to favor the Lieutenant-Governor with their views on this matter.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 19th January 1881.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 14 of the the 5th instant, and to state, in reply, that, in their judgment, the rule which His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor is disposed to introduce relative to the reduced charge of 16 rupees on all vessels alike to which leadsmen are appointed is one to which the shipping of the port can have no objection, and that they approve of it.

From Government of Bengal to Port Officer.

No. 199. *Calcutta, the 7th February* 1881.

In acknowledging the receipt of your letter No. 584 of the 31st January 1881, I am directed to say that the Lieutenant-Governor has been pleased to order that, from the 1st of April 1881, leadsmen shall be appointed to all ships alike, as they are available, and that lead-money at the rate of Rs. 16, instead of the present rate of Rs. 25, shall be levied on each vessel to which a leadsman is appointed.

2. Mr. Hoskin should, for the time that he continues to run as a Licensed Leadsman, receive only this rate of leadmoney.

No. 201.

Copy forwarded to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce for information, with reference to Mr. Wood's letter of the 19th January 1881.

By order of the
Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal,
(Sd.) C. W. BOLTON,
Under Secretary to the
Government of Bengal.

Calcutta,
The 7th February 1881.

ISSUE TO OFFICERS OF THE MERCANTILE MARINE OF CERTICATES OF COMPETENCY OF A LOWER GRADE WHEN HIGHER CERTIFICATES ARE CANCELLED OR SUSPENDED.

A correspondence has passed between the Board of Trade and the Government of India with re-

ference to the issue to an officer of the Mercantile Marine of a Colonial Certificate of lower grade in the place of a cancelled Board of Trade certificate of higher grade. As a Colonial Certificate is of equal value with a Board of Trade certificate the Home Government demurred, and insisted that when an officer had forfeited his Board of Trade certificate he should come home and submit himself to the judgment of the Board. It however would not object to an Indian Court issuing such a local certificate as would enable the recipient to work his way home only.

The Committee's opinion on the question was sought by the Government of Bengal, and they gave it to the effect that the discretion of the Local Government should not be hampered.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.
No. 264, *Calcutta, the* 19*th February* 1881.

I AM directed to forward herewith a copy of the marginally noted papers, on the subject of the issue to officers of the Mercantile Marine of a local certificate of competency of a lower grade when a certificate granted by the Board of Trade is suspended or cancelled by a Court of Enquiry in India, and to request that the Lieutenant-Governor may be favored with an ex-

Letter from this Government, No. 1260 of the 2nd October 1879, to the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department.

Resolution No. 737 of the 28th May 1880 of the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department.

Ditto No. 488 of the 10th February 1881 of ditto.

pression of the opinion of the Chamber on the last paragraph of the letter No. 488 from the Government of India.

From Government of Bengal to Government of India, No. 1269, *Calcutta, the* 2nd *October* 1872.

I AM directed to submit to the Government of India the accompanying copy of the report and proceedings* of a special court appointed under section 4, Act IV of 1875 (the Indian Merchant Shipping Act) to investigate the circumstances attending the stranding of the ship *Lady Belhaven* on the Argo Flat on the 3rd July 1879.

* From Judge of the Marine Court, dated 3rd September 1879, and enclosures.

2. In accordance with the instructions contained in the letters† No. 166, of 31st December 1878, and No. 19, of 21st January 1879, from the Revenue, Agriculture and Commerce Department of the Government of India, a copy of the proceedings of the special court, the suspended certificate of Mr. Scobey, the log-book, and a copy of this letter, have been transmitted, through the Registrar of Wrecks, Marine Survey Department, to the Board of Trade, London.

† Copies enclosed for ready reference.

3. I am to invite the attention of the Government of India to the recommendation of the special court that a First Mate's certificate be granted to Mr. Scobey during the period of suspension of his Master's certificate, and to say that this recommendation has the support of the Lieutenant-Governor. Meantime, in accordance with the further recommendation of the court, as contained in the

concluding clause of their report, a provisional local certificate of competency as First Mate has been granted to Mr. Scobey, with the object of enabling him to work his passage back to England, to await there the decision of the Board of Trade on the court's recommendation. On this point the Lieutenant-Governor desires to bring to the notice of the Government of India the fact that there is no provision in Act IV of 1875, or any other enactment, empowering a local Government to give effect to such a recommendation as that submitted by the court. A local Government may, under section 18 of Act IV of 1875, grant "a new certificate of the same or any lower grade in place of another certificate (granted by itself or another local Government) which has been cancelled or suspended;" but it would appear from section 242 of the English Merchant Shipping Act that, in regard to English certificates, this power can be exercised by the Board of Trade alone. The Lieutenant-Governor is, however, of opinion that it would be an advantage, in order to prevent hardship in certain cases, if the local Governments in India were authorized to grant colonial certificates of a lower grade in place of Board of Trade certificates which are suspended or cancelled, pending the decision of the Board on the proceedings of the courts of enquiry concerned. I am accordingly to suggest that the Board may be communicated with on the subject. Should the Board be disposed to accept the view now represented, the necessary authority might apparently be conferred on local Governments, subject to such conditions as may be deemed necessary, by a modification of the order in Council regulating the grant of Colonial certificates of competency. Under the fifth and sixth conditions of the order in Council, as they now

stand, Colonial certificates could not be granted to persons placed in Mr. Scobey's position, and they could receive local certificates only under Rule XIV, as lately amended and published in the *Calcutta Gazette* of the 4th June last.

4. With reference to the points raised in paragraph 3 of the Marine Judge's letter No. 184, of 5th September, 1879, I am to say that, with regard to points (1), and (2) the Judge has been referred to section 8, Act IV of 1875 under which the special court has the power of a Magistrate for compelling the production of *documents*, and for the examination of witnesses. The section speaks of the "investigation," that is, every stage of the investigation. The person whose conduct is under equiry will be in the position of a defendant in a complaint, and will not be examined on oath.

In regard to point (3), the Judge has been informed that it was on the representation of his predecessor that the prosecution of cases before the Marine and Pilots' Courts was transferred from the Assistant Port Officer and entrusted to the Deputy Legal Remembrancer, and that the Lieutenant-Governor does not see any necessity for a return to the old mode of prosecution.

As to (4), it has been observed that the remedy lies to a great extent in the hands of the presiding Judge, who should generally be able to restrict the duration of the proceedings within reasonable limits ; and that it would conduce to more speedy disposal of these cases if the court always sat *de die in diem*. Instructions to this effect have been separately conveyed to the Judge, and he has been requested to strictly comply with them in future.

No. 737, dated Simla, the 28th May 1880.

RESOLUTION—By the Government of India, Department of Finance and Commerce.

READ the following papers relative to the issue to officers of the Mercantile Marine of a Colonial certificate of competency of a lower grade, when a certificate by the Board of Trade is suspended or cancelled by a Court of Enquiry in India :—

Letter from the Government of Bengal, No. 1260, dated the 2nd October 1879.

Despatch to the Secretary of State, No. 384 (Statistics and Commerce), dated the 20th November 1879.

Despatch from the Secretary of State, No. 50 (Statistics and Commerce), dated the 31st March 1880.

The master of a ship holding a certificate of competency from the Board of Trade was tried for losing his ship by a Court assembled in Calcutta under Act IV of 1875. He was found guilty of incompetency and misconduct, and his certificate was suspended for twelve months, the Court recommending that he should be granted for that period, in substitution for the withdrawn certificate, a certificate as First Mate.

2. In giving their support to the recommendation, the Government of Bengal observed that there is no provision in Act IV of 1875, or any other enactment, empowering a local Government to give effect to such a recommendation; and further, that from section 242 (5) of the English Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, it appears that, in regard

to English certificates, the power of issuing a certificate of a lower grade can be exercised by the Board of Trade alone. At present the local Government has this power, under section 18 of the Act of 1875, only where local certificates are concerned. Such a certificate may, on cancellation or suspension, be re-issued, or one of a lower grade given to the person from whom it was taken, without re-examination, to test the fitness for the lower grade of the person from whom the higher certificate was withdrawn.

3. The Governments of Bombay and Bengal have the power of issuing "Colonial" certificates which are recognised as equal in value to Board of Trade certificates. But this can be issued only when a person is found competent after examination for the office for which the certificate is granted. The Government of Bengal desire to possess, in regard to the issue of Colonial certificate of a lower grade in place of a Board of Trade certificate taken away by order of a Court in India, the same power which it possesses in regard to local certificates, *viz.*, of issuing a certificate of lower grade without requiring the person to whom it is to be issued to pass the test.

4. The Board of Trade, to whom the request was transmitted by the Government of India for consideration, are not disposed to comply with it. A Colonial certificate granted in the manner suggested, in place of a cancelled or suspended Board of Trade certificate, would only be required when clearing from the United Kingdom after return from India, and therefore at a time when the holder has it in his power to obtain a Board of Trade certificate. The Board are therefore of opinion that no sufficient

reason exists for dealing with the matter at present. But it is suggested that it is competent for the local Government in such cases to grant to an officer for whom an inferior certificate is recommended, a local certificate of the same grade, which, though not enabling its owner to use it after arrival in the United Kingdom, would enable him to return as an officer from India to England.

5. The proposition of the Government of Bengal is intended to enable a man to work his passage from India to England after the suspension or withdrawal of his certificate, and the suggestion of the Board of Trade meets this object. The Governor-General in Council agrees with the Board that there are objections to the grant of the larger powers desired by the Government of Bengal.

ORDERED that a copy of this Resolution, and of the despatch from the Secretary of State, read in the preamble, be forwarded to the Government of Bengal for information.

Ordered also that the Resolution and the correspondence read, be forwarded to the Government of Bombay for information, with special reference to entry No. 159 in the Proceedings of that Government (Marine Deparment) for March last. The action of the local Government in that case was in excess of the power conferred by law.

Ordered also that a copy of the Resolution, and the correspondence, be forwarded to the Government of Madras and the Chief Commissioner of British Burmah for information.

From the RIGHT HON'BLE VISCOUNT CRANBROOK, *Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, to His Excellency the Right Hon'ble the Governor-General of India in Council; No. 50, dated India Office, London, the 31st March* 1880.

I HAVE received your letter of 20th November last, No. 384 (Statistics and Commerce), relative to the report of a Court of Enquiry held at Calcutta to investigate the circumstances of the stranding of the *Lady Belhaven*, and to the question raised by the Government of Bengal as to the issue of a certificate of a lower grade when a certificate of the Board of Trade is cancelled or suspended by a Court of Enquiry in India.

2. In reply, I forward herewith a copy of a letter received from the Board of Trade, from which you will observe that the Board see grave difficulties in the way of following the course proposed, but suggest whether it would not be competent for your Government to grant in such cases a local certificate which would enable its holder to clear from an Indian port.

From THOMAS GRAY, ESQ., *to the Under-Secretary of State for India, No.* 17803, *dated Whitehall Gardens, the 2nd December* 1879.

I AM directed by the Board of Trade to transmit to you, to be laid before Viscount Cranbrook, the report of an enquiry held at Calcutta into the circumstances attending the stranding of the *Lady Belhaven*, and also a copy of a letter from the Government of Bengal to the Indian Government.

The proceedings in this case have been received direct from the Registrar of Shipping at Calcutta.

I am to request you to state to His Lordship that, in accordance with the recommendation of the Court, the

Board of Trade will direct a First Mate's certificate to be issued to Mr. Scobey when he applies for it.

As regards the suggestion of the Lieutenant-Governor that the local Governments in India should be authorized to grant Colonial certificates of a lower grade in place of Board of Trade certificates which are suspended or cancelled, I am to state that the Board see grave difficulties in the way of giving effect to this suggestion ; and as such lower grade certificates would only be required when clearing from the United Kingdom, and therefore at a time when the officer has it in his power to obtain an Imperial certificate, the Board are of opinion that no sufficient ground exists for dealing with the matter at present.

I am, however, to suggest whether it would not be competent for the Indian Government in such cases to grant to an officer, for whom an inferior certificate had been recommended, a local certificate which though not accepted in the United Kingdom as the equivalent of an Imperial certificate would nevertheless be valid in India, and enable its possessor to clear as an officer from an Indian port. In the meantime the recommendation of the Court would be forwarded to the Board of Trade.

No. 827.

COPY, together with a copy of the enclosure, forwarded to the Port Officer for information, in continuation of this Government letter No. 1241, dated 30th September 1879.

No. 828.

COPY, together with a copy of the enclosure, forwarded to the Judge of the Marine Court for information, in con-

tinuation of this Government letter No. 1258, dated 2nd October 1879.

No. 829.

COPY, together with a copy of the enclosure, forwarded to the Superintendent of Marine for information, in continuation of this Office endorsement No. 1259, dated 2nd October 1879.

By order of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal,

C. W. BOLTON,

Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

CALCUTTA;
GENERAL DEPT.—*Marine*,
The 19th June 1880.

Fort William, the 10th February 1881.

Read the undermentioned papers touching the issue by Local Governments in India of a local certificate of competency of a lower grade to an officer of the Mercantile Marine, whose certificate from the Board of Trade is suspended or cancelled by a Marine Court of Enquiry in India:—

Resolution in the Department of Finance and Commerce No. 737, dated the 28th May 1880.

Resolution by the Government of Bombay, No. 372, dated the 1st July 1880.

Despatch from the Secretary of State, No. 87 (Statistics and Commerce), dated the 30th June 1880.

RESOLUTION.—The Government of India is now advised that there is no provision in the law, as it stands,

authorising the issue by a Local Government of a local certificate of competency to a master, mate, or engineer of the Mercantile Marine in place of a Board of Trade certificate cancelled or suspended by order of a Court of Enquiry in India.

The direction conveyed in the Resolution of May last, authorising the grant of such certificates, is accordingly suspended.

2. The local certificate as first mate issued to Mr. Harris, late master of S. S. *Shah Jehan*, should accordingly, if possible, be recovered as requested by the Secretary of State and the Board of Trade.

3. The object of the grant of a local certificate on the cancellation or suspension of a Board of Trade or Colonial certificate is to enable the holder of the cancelled or suspended certificate to work his passage from India to England as an officer of a grade lower than that mentioned in the suspended or cancelled certificate,—in other terms, to enable, for instance, a master to work his way home as a mate.

The Governor-General in Council will be glad to be favoured with an expression of the opinion of the Local Maritime Governments whether it is necessary or desirable to legislate (in the Bill now under preparation for the re-enactment and amendment of Act IV of 1875), so as to give the power to Local Governments of granting a local certificate in place of a suspended or cancelled Board of Trade or Colonial certificate, and whether any restrictions should be placed on the power of making such grants, as, for instance, whether the power should be ex-

ercisable only on the recommendation of the Court of Enquiry which cancels or suspends the Board of Trade or Colonial certificate.

ORDER.—Ordered, that a copy of this Resolution and of the Despatch from the Secretary of State, read in the preamble, be forwarded to the Governments of Madras, Bombay, and Bengal, and to the Chief Commissioner of British Burmah, for information, guidance, and early report.

Ordered also, that a copy of this Resolution and of the papers read in the preamble be forwarded to the Legislative Department.*

* With copy of notes.

STEPHEN JACOB,
Asst. Secy. to the Govt. of India.

ENCLOSURE OF RESOLUTION NO. 488 OF 1881.

From Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, to the Government of India.—No. 87 (Statistics and Commerce), dated 30th June 1880.

1. With reference to paragraph 2 of your letter of 20th April last, No. 22 (Marine), I forward herewith a copy of a letter* received from the Board of Trade regarding the issue by your Government to Mr. Harris, late master of the S. S. *Shah Jehan*, of a duplicate of the certificate granted to him as first mate for the period of the suspension of the certificate as master granted to him by the

* Dated 21st May 1880.

Board of Trade. The Board point out that the sole power of granting a new certificate of the same or any lower grade in place of any certificate which has been cancelled or suspended is conferred on the Board of Trade by the Merchant Shipping Act Amendment Act of 1862. I therefore desire that, as requested by the Board, you will cause the necessary steps to be taken for recovering possession of the duplicate certificate issued to Mr. Harris.

2. The general question involved in this case was referred to in Lord Cranbrook's Despatch No. 50, dated 31st March last, in connection with the stranding of the *Lady Belhaven*.

From the Board of Trade, London, to the Under-Secretary of State for India.—No. 9456M., dated 21st May 1880.

I am directed by the Board of Trade to transmit herewith a copy of a Despatch addressed by the Port Officer and President of the Board of Examiners at Bombay to the Registrar-General of Seamen, reporting the suspension of the Board of Trade certificate as master of Mr. Robert Ediss Harris, the late master of the S.S. *Shah Jehan*, by the Court which enquired into the cause of the accident to that vessel, and the issue, in accordance with the recommendation of the Court, of a first mate's certificate to Mr. Harris by the Government at Bombay for the interval during which his master's certificate was suspended.

2. With reference thereto, I am to offer the following observations for Lord Hartington's information.

3. Under section 18 of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, 1875, the Indian Government have power to grant a new certificate of the same or any lower grade in place of any certificate which has been cancelled or suspended, but such new certificate can only be granted in cases in which the cancelled or suspended certificate is one granted by the Indian or other Local Government.

4. The only power the Bombay or other Indian Local Government have of dealing with Imperial certificates is conferred on them by Imperial legislation, and under section 23 (4) of the Merchant Shipping Act Amendment Act, 1862, the sole power of granting a new certificate of the same or any lower grade in place of any certificate which has been cancelled or suspended is conferred on the Board of Trade.

5. Para. 6 of the Order in Council of the 11th of July 1877 (a copy of which is enclosed), which regulates the grant of certificates by the Government of Bombay, also refers to this point.

6. The Bombay Government therefore acted *ultra vires* in granting a first mate's certificate to Mr. Harris during the suspension of his Board of Trade certificate, and I am to suggest that the matter should be brought to their notice, with a request that steps should be taken for recovering possession of the said certificate.

From the Port Officer and President of the Board of Examiners, Bombay, to the Registrar-General of Seamen, Bombay.—No. 742, *dated 3rd April* 1880.

I have the honor to acquaint you that at a Marine Court of Enquiry held at Bombay on the 20th February

last, which was appointed to investigate the circumstances of an accident to the S. S. *Shah Jehan*, which happened to that vessel while on her passage from the south along the Coast to Bombay, the Board of Trade certificate of competency as master to Robert Ediss Harris, the commander of the vessel, No. 29181, was suspended for twelve months, and a duplicate of his certificate as first mate, for which he passed before the Board of Examiners in Bombay, has, under the recommendation of the Court and the orders of the Government of Bombay, been issued to him during the period of suspension of his certificate as master. I have therefore the honor to request that on the certificate as master being re-issued to him when the period of suspension expires, the duplicate of his certificate as first mate from the Bombay Government may be returned to this office.

It will be observed that in this instance the applicant had passed his mate's examination at this port, and consequently no difficulty was experienced in granting a duplicate of the certificate. As, however, future similar occasions may arise here when the holder of a Board of Trade certificate which may be suspended may be ordered to be granted a certificate of a lower grade during the period of such suspension, though he may not have qualified in any grade at this port, I have the honor to solicit instructions as to the procedure which should be adopted, and whether a Colonial or Indian Trade certificate, or either, should be issued, observing that the latter (Indian) would enable the holder to proceed to any other port, and to England, where he would be able to obtain a certificate from the Board of Trade.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 3rd March 1881.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 264 of the 19th ultimo.

They have carefully considered the 3rd paragraph of Government of India Resolution No. 488 of the 10th February, to which their attention is specially drawn by you, and they are of opinion that it is desirable to legislate with the view to give Local Governments the power to grant local certificates in place of suspended or cancelled Board of Trade or Colonial certificates.

The Committee are also of opinion that, while the recommendation of any Marine Court of Inquiry in India should be well weighed and considered, the exercise of the power proposed to be given to Local Governments should be unrestricted and dependent upon their own judgment of the merits of each case.

EXPOSURE OF EUROPEAN SEAMEN TO THE SUN WHILE EMPLOYED IN WORK ON BOARDSHIP IN THE HOT SEASON.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 21st February 1881.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge your letter No. 205 of 8th February, forwarding copies of correspondence relative to the hours of employment of European seamen in this

Port on work necessitating exposure to the sun, and requesting the views of the Chamber on the proposal to empower the Port Commissioners by legislation to regulate such hours of work.

The Committee are of opinion that the proposed legislation is perhaps the best mode of dealing with a difficult question; but they would suggest that the Port Commissioners be instructed to proceed in the matter with such caution as not to interfere with the discipline nor to hamper the work necessary on boardship.

From Government of Bengal to the Chamber, Marine No. 205, Calcutta, the 8th February 1881.

I am directed to forward a copy of the correspondence noted in the margin, in which it is proposed that the Port Commissioners of Calcutta should be empowered by legislation to regulate the hours of employment of European seamen in this port on work necessitating exposure to the sun, and to request that the Lieutenant-Governor may be favoured with the views of the Chamber on the proposal.

1. To Port Commissioners, No. 56 of 27th April 1880.
2. From Port Commissioners, No. 606 of 19th May 1880, and enclosures.
3. To Port Commissioners, No. 700, dated 25th May 1880.
4. From Hon'ble Mr. Justice S. White, dated 13th May 1880.
5. From Port Commissioners, No. 734 of 31st May 1880.
6. To the Government of Bengal, Legislative Department, No. 401 of 16th June 1880.
7. From Port Commissioners, No. 1424 of 29th July 1880.

From H. J. Reynolds, Esq., *Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department, to the Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners, No. 56. dated Calcutta, the 27th April* 1880.

The attention of the Lieutenant-Governor has been directed to the question of European sailors belonging to

vessels lying in the port being required to work in the open air during the heat of the day at this season of the year.

2. The Committee of the Sailors' Home circulated last year a small pamphlet of rules and suggestions for the treatment of sunstroke, and recommended that all work which required exposure to the sun should be performed either before breakfast or after 4 P. M. There is reason, however, to fear that this recommendation has not been generally attended to.

3. It seems doubtful whether the wording of the law would admit of a port rule on the subject being passed under Act XII of 1875, or Act V (B.C.) of 1870; but it appears to the Lieutenant-Governor that some interference on the part of the authorities is called for, and Sir Ashley Eden would be much obliged if the Port Commissioners would take the question into their consideration, and would favour him with an expression of their opinion as to the procedure which would be most applicable to the case.

From J. S. WHITE, ESQ., *to the Private Secretary of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, dated Calcutta, the 13th May* 1880.

I have the honor to forward, for presentation to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, the accompanying memorial, praying for legislation in order to prevent the unnecessary exposure of sailors and apprentices to our tropical sun whilst ships are lying in the Port of Calcutta during the south-west monsoon.

The memorial is signed by 76 persons belonging to the clerical, legal, military, medical, and mercantile classes,

and also to other classes interested in or connected with shipping and the port. This number might with ease have been considerably increased, but the aim has been to confine the signatories to those now in Calcutta, who represent the principal classes of the community.

After the memorial had been circulated and signed, my attention was diverted to the Resolution of Government upon the report of the Health Officer of the port for the year 1879, which was published in the *Calcutta Gazette* of yesterday. From this source I learn with great satisfaction that the subject with which the memorial deals has already been brought to the notice of Government by the Committee of the Sailors' Home through the Health Officer, and that the question is now under the consideration of Government. I was not aware of this when the memorial was being prepared and circulated. I trust that the memorial may, notwithstanding, have a useful effect in inducing Government to expedite legislation. It indicates, at all events, that in the opinion of the memorialists and those whom they may fairly be said to represent, speedy legislation on the subject is extremely desirable.

To the HON'BLE SIR ASHLEY EDEN, K.C.S.I., C.I.E.,
Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

The memorial of the undersigned inhabitants of Calcutta and others,

RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH—

That there has existed for some time in the port of Calcutta a practice, as regards vessels lying in harbour, of put-

ting the European sailors and ship-apprentices on work outside the ships and also aloft during the hottest hours of the day in the months of the south-west monsoon, which extends from the 15th of March to the 31st of October.

That your memorialists are given to understand that the consequent exposure to the burning heat of a tropical sun is the direct cause of many of the numerous cases of sun-stroke, heat-apoplexy, and continued fever which usually occur in Calcutta during those months amongst European seamen; and the fact that some of these cases have terminated fatally supplies a strong argument for checking a practice which in itself is inhuman and is also unquestionably dangerous to health and life.

That your memorialists believe that, except in very rare instances, no real necessity exists for compelling European seamen to incur so formidable a peril whilst vessels are lying at anchor in a safe harbour.

That in the present state of the law a European sailor or apprentice cannot refuse to work in the manner and at the time above referred to without becoming liable to the penalty for disobedience of a lawful order, such penalty being imprisonment for four weeks and the forfeiture of two days' pay, or, if the disobedience is continued, imprisonment for twelve weeks and the forfeiture of six days' pay. That the power thus placed in the hands of a ship captain or mate is one which no master ought legally to be permitted to exercise over his fellow-man except in a case of positive and well-proved necessity, and it is also a power which is obviously liable to abuse if the master should chance to be unfeeling and inconsiderate, or a man of

an ill-regulated temper, or if he should desire either in his own interests or those of the shipowner so to act as to force his crew, or any particular sailor, to accept a discharge at the port of Calcutta.

That your memorialists are advised that the Port Commissioners of Calcutta, although armed with extensive powers for other purposes, have no authority to regulate the hours of work on board of ships whilst lying in port, or to prescribe what work only shall be done during certain hours, or what safeguards shall be used to diminish the risk of sunstroke and illness from exposure to the heat of the day, and that, in order to make rules for regulating these matters, it is necessary to have recourse to fresh legislation.

Your memorialists very respectfully submit, for your Honor's consideration, that such legislation falls peculiarly within the province of the Bengal Legislative Council, the port and city of Calcutta being subject to the administration of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

Your memorialists therefore pray—

That your Honor will be pleased to direct the introduction into Council of a Bill to confer upon the local Government, or such other authority as may seem advisable, power to make rules for regulating within the limits of the port of Calcutta, as regards European sailors and apprentices, the hours of labour and the distribution of work on board of ships during the south-west monsoon, with a view to prevent the unnecessary exposure of this class of the community to the risk of sun-

stroke and other diseases due to tropical heat, and also with a view to provide that, when such exposure is necessary, proper and sufficient precaution shall be used in order to diminish the risk.

EDWARD R. CALCUTTA.
RICHARD GARTH.
J. PICTHALL, M.D.
W. HENRY BRAY.
HENRY CAYLEY.
J. JONES, M.D.
WELBORE MACCARTHY.
GEORGE G. GILLAN.
CHAS. H. JOUBERT, M.B.
ARTHUR WILSON.
HENRY BEVERLEY.
C. O. WOODFORD.
JOHN CARRICK.
JOHN MORISON.
JOHN F. MACNAIR.
JAMES HEPBURN.
WALTER EWING CRUM.
J. A. ANDERSON.
J. W. O'KEEFE.
W. J. M. MCCAW.
JOHN FLEMINGTON.
C. S. DAWSON.
R. D. LYALL.
J. SEWELL WHITE.
T. B. HARRISON.
W. F. MCDONELL.
CHARLES PONTIFEX.
HENRY BELL.
CHAS. T. MACLEAN.
J. F. BROWNE.
L. R. TOTTENHAM.
LOUIS JACKSON.
L. P. DELVES BROUGHTON.
SPENCER GORE BROWNE.
J. C. MACGREGOR.
A. PHILLIPS.
J. M. MARSDEN.
JOHN D. BELL.
A. B. MILLER.
JOHN ECKFORD.
WILLIAM CRAIK.
F. W. PEEL.
TAMVACO & CO.
GEORGE MILLER.
D. LANDALE.
JOHN M. LYALL.
G. H. SIMMONS.
C. J. WILKINSON, P & O. Supdt.
J. D. MACLEAN.
S. H. ROBINSON.
J. J. BROWNE.
T. H. MOSLEY.
D. J. WELSH.

HENRY P. PARKER.
C. SUMNER HARINGTON.
W. M. WALTON.
A. B. SANDEMAN.
H. J. C. TURNER.
F. A. GOODWIN.
K. B. STUART, M.D.
S. MIGNON.
T. & JAMES SAGE.
The Commander, British Steamer *Sir William Peel.*
J. MCARTHUR.
J. FERGUSON.
ARTHUR W. SKIFFE, Port Officer.
FRED. WARDEN.
R. B. YATES.
W. M. EDWARDS.
W. L. SEARLE.
GEO. TEALE.
J. H. O'BRIEN.
W. DUFF BRUCE.
JOHN V. FALLE.
J. SUTHERLAND.
H. T. PRINSEP.

From W. D. BRUCE, ESQ., C.E., *Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department, No.* 606, *dated Calcutta, the* 19*th May* 1880.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 56, dated 27th April 1880, requesting the Commissioners to take into consideration and report what steps can be taken to prevent sailors from being unnecessarily exposed to the sun during the heat of the day. On receipt of your letter, a copy of it was forwarded to the Commissioners' Solicitor, with a request that he would inform the Commissioners whether, under the provisions of any law now existing, they or Government could interfere in the matter. He replied that under no Act now in force could the Government or the Commissioners pass rules to restrain masters of vessels from employing their men on work which necessitated exposure to the sun during the heat of the day. All that the Commissioners can

do, he says, is to issue a request to masters of vessels, asking them to refrain during certain months from employing their men on such work.

2. The correspondence was submitted for the consideration of the Commissioners at last meeting, and it was then resolved that a notice should be put up in some conspicuous place in the Port Office, requesting masters of vessels to refrain, as much as possible during the hot season, from employing their men between 11 A.M. and 4 P.M. on work involving exposure to the sun. The Commissioners agree with Mr. Sanderson in thinking that beyond this they have no power to interfere.

3. From a return prepared by the Commissioner of Police of the deaths among the sailors in port, attributable to sunstroke during 1879, a copy of which is submitted herewith, it will be seen that out of four fatal cases two were attributable to drink, and one was a Malay fireman, not a seaman, so that apparently there was only one case during 1879 which could be attributed to exposure to the sun.

From CHARLES SANDERSON, ESQ., *Solicitor to the Port Commissioners, to the Secretary to the Port Commissioners; No.* 4976, *dated Calcutta, the* 30*th April* 1880.

I am in receipt of your letter No. 410, dated the 29th instant, forwarding copy of a letter from the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, dated the 27th instant, and requesting me to inform the Commissioners whether they could interfere with a view to put a stop to European sailors belonging to vessels lying in the port of Calcutta working exposed to the sun at this season of the year.

I have considered the several Acts relating to the port of Calcutta and the shipping therein, and am of opinion that, under the Acts in force, no port rule can be framed which can have any force, and the way the Commissioners can interfere is to issue a request to all masters and officers of vessels, urging on them during the months, say of April, May, June, and July, or such other months as may be thought expedient, to refrain as much as possible from employing European seamen between the hours of 9 A.M. and 4 P.M, on work which will expose them to the sun and sunstroke. Of course, if they do not take any notice of this request, and employ their men unnecessarily in the sun, whereby such men suffer, the Commissioners can not prevent it.

From S. S. LYNCH, Esq., *Health Officer of the Port of Calcutta, to the Commissioner of Police, Calcutta, No. 99, dated Calcutta, the 10th April* 1880.

I have the honor to invite your attention to a letter in the *Englishman* of the 8th instant, from the Rev. Mr. Bray, and to one in the 9th, from Dr. Joubert, calling attention to the unrecorded deaths, from the effects of heat, of seamen on board ships in the port; and, with reference thereto, to solicit the favor of your informing me whether any such deaths have been included by the River Police in the return forwarded to me with your No. 689 of the 28th February. In that return you will find three sudden deaths of Europeans from apoplexy, &c., and it may be that these are the sort of cases alluded to by the correspondents of the paper referred to. My own limited experience in the port does not go to confirm the view taken by the Rev. Mr. Bray that many such deaths happen on board vessels in the river.

The total number of cases of sunstroke amongst English sailors afloat during last year, as shown in the hospital returns, was two, with one death. The statement of the Reverend gentleman, however, makes it uncertain whether others did not happen besides those in the hospital.

It will be of great assistance to me in making out the health returns of the port in future, if you will be good enough to direct the supply to me of information regarding the deaths (Europeans and Natives) which occur in the river, at the same time as, and in the same form in which, it is given by the police to the Health Officer of the Town.

From J. LAMBERT, ESQ., *Deputy Commissioner of Police, Calcutta, to the Health Officer of the Port of Calcutta, No.* 1272, *dated Calcutta, the 15th April* 1880.

With reference to your letter No. 99 of the 10th instant, I have the honor to inform you that only four seamen, whose names are given in the margin, died from apoplexy on board of ships in the port of Calcutta during the year 1879.

1. Richard Gilliott, Captain, 3rd January.
2. Henry Gill, A. B. 20th May.
3. William Webster, Second Officer, 23rd July.
4. Cincero, Fireman, 23rd July.

It was ascertained that the first was seen drunk for 24 hours previous to his death; that the third had been in a continued state of intoxication for three days, and that the fourth, Cincero the Malay, was a fireman and not a seaman; so that only one death from exposure to the sun occurred among seamen in the port during the past year. These deaths were all duly registered at the River Police

stations, and were included in the return forwarded to you with this office letter No. 689 of the 28th February 1880.

From C. W. BOLTON, ESQ., *Under-Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department, to the Vice-Chairman to the Port Commissioners, No.* 700, *dated Calcutta, the 25th May* 1880.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 606, dated the 19th May 1880, with enclosures, and to request that you will be good enough to forward to this office a copy of the notice which the Commissioners propose to issue to masters of vessels at this port regarding the working hours of sailors during the hot season, in order that the Government may take measures to make it as widely known as possible.

From W. D. BRUCE, ESQ., C E., *Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department, No.* 734, *dated Calcutta, the* 31*st May* 1880.

In reply to your letter No. 700 of the 25th instant, I have the honor to submit herewith, for the information of Government, a copy of the notice to masters of vessels in the port regarding the working hours of the sailors during the hot season :—

NOTICE.

The Port Commissioners have recently had under consideration the subject of employing British sailors during the heat of the day on work which exposes them to the sun, or necessitates their confinement for a lengthened period in a badly ventilated ship's hold. Such exposure or confinement is calculated to induce fatal attacks of sunstroke and heat apoplexy, and during the hot season such cases

frequently occur. The Port Commissioners therefore earnestly request that masters of vessels lying in the port during the months of April to October will refrain, as far as possible, from employing their men between the hours of 11 A.M. and 4 P.M. on work which necessitates exposure to the sun or confinement in the hold.

G. H. SIMMONS,
Secretary.

Port Commr.'s Office, the 31st May 1880.

From A. MACKENZIE, ESQ., *Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department, to the Assistant Secretary to the Government of Bengal, in the Legislative Department, No.* 407, *dated Darjeeling, the* 16*th June* 1880.

I am directed to forward herewith a copy of the correspondence noted in the margin regarding measures to prevent the unnecessary exposure to the sun of European seamen belonging to vessels lying in the port of Calcutta during the hot months of the year.

To Port Commissioners, No. 56, dated 27th April 1880.
From Port Commissioners, No. 606, dated 19th May 1880, and enclosures.
To Port Commissioners, No. 700, dated 25th May 1880.
From Port Commissioners, No. 734, dated 31st May 1880, and enclosure.
Memorial, without date, signed by the Lord Bishop, the Chief Justice, and other inhabitants of Calcutta.

2. It appears that neither the Government nor the Port Commissioners have any power, as the law now stands, authoritatively to prevent the practice in question by limiting the hours of work or in any other way. The Lieutenant-Governor thinks it reasonable that the Port Commissioners should have power to make a port rule prescribing the hours during which European seamen may be employed on boardship on work necessitating exposure to the sun, and I am to

request that you will, in communication with the Port Commissioners, draft for approval a short Act to be read with Act V (B.C.) of 1870, giving them this power.

3. At the same time the Lieutenant-Governor finds reason to believe that the direct mortality among seamen from the effects of exposure to the sun is not so great as the memorialists have been led to believe. The correspondence attached to the Port Commissioners' letter No. 606 of the 19th May, shows that in reality only one death of a European seaman occurred in 1879 from exposure to the sun on boardship. It is probable that the evil results of such exposure are manifested rather in fevers and other illnesses than in actual death from sunstroke. It is, however, desirable to bring the matter of the employment of sailors in the port under regulation.

No. 41T.

COPY forwarded to the Vice-Chairman to the Port Commissioners for the information and guidance of the Commissioners, with reference to the correspondence ending with their letter No. 734, dated 31st May 1880.

By order of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal,

A. MACKENZIE,

Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

DARJEELING,
The 16th June 1880.

From W. D. BRUCE, ESQ., C.E., *Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department, No.* 1421, *dated Calcutta, the 29th July* 1880.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your endorsement No. 41T, dated 16th June 1880, forwarding

copy of a letter addressed to the Legislative Department, directing the preparation of a short Act to be read with Act V of 1870, authorizing the Commissioners to prescribe certain limited hours during the hot season for employment of European seamen on work necessitating exposure to the sun. In pursuance of the above order, Mr. Forsyth placed himself in communication with the Commissioners on the subject, and suggested that the object in view would be gained by inserting the following clause after clause (*e*) of Section 20 of Act IV of 1880 :—

Proposed Clause.

"For prescribing and regulating the hours during which European seamen and apprentices, shipped on the same footing as European seamen, may be employed on board ships or on wharves, quays, stages, jetties, and piers, in work necessitating exposure to the sun."

2. Mr. Forsyth's letter and the clause quoted above were considered by the Commissioners at a meeting held on the 16th instant, and the Commissioners being of opinion that the object in view would be gained by adopting Mr. Forsyth's suggestion, resolved that the draft section submitted by Mr. Forsyth be approved and forwarded to Government.

3. A copy of Mr. Forsyth's letter, together with the resolution passed thereupon, is submitted herewith for the information of Government.

Copy of a Resolution passed by the Commissioners at a Meeting held on the 16th July 1880.

Reconsidered letter from Government, No. 41T, dated 16th June 1880, circulated with papers of last meeting

(No. 4), and the following letter from the Assistant Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Legislative Department, submitting the draft of a section to be added to Act IV of 1880, empowering the Commissioners to prescribe the hours during which European sailors may be employed on works necessitating exposure to the sun.

Read also the letter from the Shipping-master on the subject.

Resolved.—That the draft section submitted by Mr. Forsyth be approved and submitted to Government.

C. T. BUCKLAND,
Chairman.

From W. E. H. FORSYTH, ESQ., *Officiating Assistant Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Legislative Department, to the Vice-Chairman of the Port Commissioners. Dated Calcutta, the 2nd July* 1880.

Having been requested by the Lieutenant-Governor to draft a short Act enabling the Port Commissioners to prescribe the hours during which European seamen may be employed on work necessitating exposure to the sun, I think the object might be effected by adding to the subjects on which the Commissioners are enabled to make rules, and enclose for the approval of the Commissioners, the accompanying section:—

Proposed Section.

After clause (*e*) of Bengal Act IV of 1880 the following words shall be added :—

"(*ee*).—For prescribing and regulating the hours during which European seamen and apprentices shipped on the

same footing as European seamen may be employed on boardships, or on wharves, quays, stages, jetties, and piers in work necessitating exposure to the sun."

TRADE IN OIL BETWEEN CALCUTTA AND AUSTRALIA.

The Government of India, with the view to encouraging a trade in oil between this country and Australia, have been making inquiries on the subject, and the Committee's reply to the reference submitted to them will be found below.

From Government of India to Chamber.

No. 70, Calcutta, 4th March 1881.

Home, Revenue, and Agricultural Department. Agriculture and Horticulture.

The Government of India understands that Mr. Buck, Director of Agriculture and Commerce, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, who is now in Australia, is considering what can be done to encourage a trade in oil between India and Australia, the cake being utilised in this country as fodder.

2. I am accordingly to inquire whether the Chamber could without much trouble obtain from the proprietors of the local mills, or from any other source, information on the following points:—

1. Cost of outlay in establishing a manufactory.
2. Outturn.
3. Selling price of oil and cake.

4. Destination of ditto.

5. Profit.

3. Should the Chamber think it desirable to obtain information on any other points calculated to facilitate Mr. Buck's objects, the Government of India would be glad to be put in possession of it.

From Chamber to Government of India.

Calcutta, 4th April 1881.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 70 of the 4th ultimo, relative to trade in linseed oil between India and Australia, and in reply I am desired by the Committee to offer the following remarks :—

There are very few linseed oil-crushing manufactories in Calcutta, and it is therefore somewhat difficult to give satisfactory replies on some of the points on which you seek information; but from what the Committee have learned, they are able to reply, categorically, as follows :—

(1). The cost of establishing an oil manufactory must necessarily depend on the extent of the business to be carried on, but it is estimated that for a cost of between Rs. 30,000 and Rs. 60,000, mills of the size now existing here, could be erected, provided with all requisite machinery and out-works for storage of grain, oil cake, &c.

(2). A mill with a 20 Horse Power Engine is estimated to crush about 100 tons or 2,700 maunds of linseed per month, yielding about $\frac{1}{3}$rd or 900 maunds of oil and $\frac{2}{3}$rd, or 1,800 maunds of cake.

(3). The present selling price of oil is Rs. 14-8 to 15 per maund, and of cake Rs. 1-10 to Rs. 2-4.

(4). The oil extracted here seems to be consumed entirely in this country, whilst the cake is exported almost exclusively to England.

(5). It is impossible to estimate the profits made in this industry, but they cannot be more than very moderate, otherwise the trade would ere this have assumed larger proportions.

Manufacturers find it more profitable to sell their cake for export than for cattle feeding purposes here, where only very cheap cost would induce farmers to use it.

I am directed to suggest, for Mr. Buck's consideration, whether it would not be more profitable in opening up a trade with Australia to allow that colony to itself manufacture the oil and cake, receiving the seed in bulk from India. Linseed is a preferable cargo for vessels than either of its products, oil being liable to leakage, and cake, on account of its bulk and lightness, being considered objectionable cargo.

NEW MEMBERS.

Messrs. Sigg, Sulzer and Co. and Messrs. G. M. Struthers and Co., have been admitted as members of the Chamber, subject to the usual confirmation.

FUNDS OF THE CHAMBER.

The balance at credit of the Chamber on the 30th April 1881, amounted to Rs. 2,857-10-8, exclusive of Rs. 15,000 in 4 per cent. Government Securities.

WALTER E. CRUM,
President.

REPORT

OF

THE COMMITTEE

OF THE

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

For the half-year ended 31st October 1881.

CALCUTTA:
PRINTED BY THOMAS S. SMITH, CITY PRESS,
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1882.

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Proceedings of the Half-yearly General Meeting of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, held on Tuesday, the 17th of January 1882.

THE HON'BLE A. B INGLIS, *President*, in the Chair.

The Chairman opened the proceedings by stating that the Meeting had been convened, by public notice as usual, for the purpose of receiving the Report of the Committee for the half-year ended the 31st October last, and transacting any other business which might be brought forward; and he then delivered the following address :—

GENTLEMEN,—Before proceeding to speak about the Report, I am sure the meeting will expect me to refer to the great loss the Chamber has sustained by the lamented death of my predecessor in office, Mr. Crum. Although Mr. Crum had only resided among us for the short period of 26 months before his death, he had won the respect of all classes. He was asked to join the Committee of the Chamber soon after his arrival in Calcutta, and his election to the office of President in May 1880, after a stay of only six months among us, testified to the esteem in

which he was held at that early period by the members of the Chamber generally. His subsequent career as President of the Chamber and Sheriff of Calcutta served only to deepen these feelings of regard, and we were all anticipating with regret the loss of his services to Calcutta by his intended removal to Bombay, when he was struck down by the illness which terminated fatally a week ago. The Committee recorded the following minute the day after Mr. Crum died, and I am sure it expresses the feelings of every member of the Chamber who knew him.

"The Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce have learned with very deep sorrow that the long and painful illness of their colleague Mr. Walter Ewing Crum terminated last evening in his death; and they have met for the sole purpose of placing on record the warm personal regard which every member of the Committee felt for Mr. Crum, and the high appreciation which they entertain of his services to the Chamber during his year of office as President, and subsequently.

"The Committee are satisfied that all classes will unite with them in lamenting the irreparable loss which has been inflicted upon the mercantile community of Calcutta by the premature

removal from their midst of a man of Mr. Crum's sterling character, experience and ability.

"The Committee desire that a copy of this minute be transmitted to Mrs. Crum, as an expression of their profound sympathy with her and the other members of Mr. Crum's family.

Following the usual custom, I have now, on the part of the Committee, to give some account of the subjects which occupied our attention during the past half-year.

The first to which I will refer is the mail-day. We all feel the inconvenience of a Monday mail-day in a busy place like Calcutta, where two clear days are needed for the preparation of the mail for England, and in June last we drew the attention of Government to the matter with a view to having the day changed to Tuesday, so as not to interfere with the Sunday rest we all so greatly need. No reply has yet been received to this communication. If the delay in replying arises from an inability to adduce any good reason for refusing our request, I hope the authorities will shortly yield the point. If we saw that any alteration of the day would cause inconvenience to other places we would not be so persistent. But when it can be shewn

that the change we ask would cause no inconvenience elsewhere, we are not at all disposed to reconcile ourselves to the present arrangement. The case stands thus. The Secretary of State has declared that the departure of the mails from India must be so arranged as to permit of their delivery in London every Tuesday morning. Between 7th February 1881, when the present mail-days began, up to the end of the last year, 47 mails have been dispatched from India. Of these 37 were delivered in London on Monday, 9 on Tuesday, and 1 on Wednesday. Looking to the fact that in 4 cases out of 5 letters are now delivered in London a day earlier than the Secretary of State has declared to be necessary, it is self-evident that the delay of a day in starting the mails from Bombay might be granted without the smallest inconvenience to any one.

We only ask, however, that the dispatch be delayed for twelve hours from Bombay. The Committee have pointed out that by starting the mail train somewhat earlier from Calcutta and other stations, slightly accelerating its speed, and reducing the number of stoppages, the mails would arrive in Bombay at daylight. If the mail steamer embarked its passengers and local letters over night, the letters from

Northern India, Bengal, and Madras arriving in Bombay by train at daylight would be sent at once on board the mail steamer, which would then start in the early morning of Friday, instead of as now on the Thursday evening. In this way the detention of Calcutta letters for 9 hours, which occurs weekly in Bombay, would be avoided, and the Bombay mail-day would not be interfered with.

The twelve hours' delay we ask for in the dispatch of the mail steamer from Bombay in order to give Calcutta a Tuesday mail-day during the cold weather, might easily be made up, and a good deal more, during the sea portion of the journey, if the P. and O. steamers were in every case up to modern requirements. Complaints are frequent regarding the time occupied by the steamers on the line between Bombay and Suez, and in view of the great speed at which vessels are run on mail and passenger lines of far inferior importance, the service between these places, and particularly between Alexandria and Brindisi, cannot be said to be performed in a satisfactory manner. Instead of the best boats the Company possesses being used to carry the Indian mails, they have laterly been placed on the Australian line to compete with the Orient Company at rates

which make us envy the Australian passengers, and their oldest and least efficient steamers made use of in some cases to serve the Indian lines. If a swifter class of vessels were employed, the voyage between Bombay and Suez might be shortened by at least two days, and that between Alexandria and Brindisi by one day. As, however, we cannot expect any increase of speed until the termination of the present contract, and not even then unless the Indian public speak out pretty freely, we have in the meantime confined ourselves to the more modest programme of pointing out the time that might be saved on the land portion of the journey. At Suez and Brindisi detentions occur regularly which might easily be avoided, and the committee are satisfied that, with proper arrangements, a saving of 12 hours might be effected in the time now occupied by the transit of the mails through Egypt and across the Continent, apart altogether from any acceleration of speed at sea.

Another matter which has for some time occupied the attention of the Committee is the threatened diversion to Bombay of the trade between Calcutta and the North-West since the opening of the Rajputana Railway. We have been in communication both with the Govern-

ment of India and the East Indian Railway authorities on this subject, pointing out that a serious loss of traffic to the East Indian line can only be averted by a timely reduction in rates of carriage and by improved facilities for export at Howrah. The extent to which Bombay is gaining on Calcutta in the matter of exports may be seen from the following figures giving the relative percentages of cotton, seeds, and wheat shipped from each port for the seven months from 1st April to 31st October during the last three years.

		1879	1880	1881
Cotton	Bengal ...	20·30 per cent.	9·96	7·11
	Bombay...	79·70	90·04	92 89
Seeds	Bengal ...	78·14	67·04	46·89
	Bombay...	21 86	32·96	53·11
Wheat	Bengal ...	87·03	54 93	38·12
	Bombay...	12·97	45·07	61 88

It is evident from these figures that a displacement of trade is going on which may have the most important consequences for Calcutta. Without cherishing any jealous feelings regarding the growing prosperity of Bombay, or grudging to that port the fair share of trade to which her proximity to Europe and natural advantages entitle her, we have cause for alarm in the fact that the progress the Western Port

is making is largely at our expense. The question, therefore, becomes a very practical one, whether anything can be done to restore the balance which seems to be so rapidly shifting in favour of Bombay. It is of special importance to us to retain our full share of the stream of trade between Calcutta and the North-West, and to prevent its being diverted into new channels. The two public bodies who can do most to help us in this matter are the East Indian Railway and the Calcutta Port Trust, the former by giving us cheaper inland carriage, and the latter by reducing port charges. I may say in passing that the interests of both bodies are identical with those of the merchants so far as attracting trade to the port goes.

The Port Trust have done something during the past year to reduce pilotage, port dues, and jetty charges, and seem now to be alive to the necessity of further reducing the heavy burdens on shipping which still remain and tend to handicap Calcutta as compared with other ports. We all believe this to be a wise policy, not only in the interests of Calcutta but in the interests of the Port Trust itself, and it is greatly to be desired that the Commissioners may find themselves in a position to give further relief to the shipping during the present year. We have arrived at a

critical period in the history of the port, and any relief afforded now will have far more effect than it would have a year hence.

As regards the East Indian Railway, if they wish to retain and extend the present traffic over their line with the North-West, they must reduce rates and afford additional facilities to exporters at Howrah. We have pointed out to the railway authorities that, for much of the traffic connected with stations equi-distant by rail from Calcutta and Bombay, a preference will be shown, at equal railway rates, to the latter port, owing to the cheaper sea freights and much less expensive port charges prevailing there. The Government of India, in replying to the Chamber's reference on this subject, declare their policy to be "that the prevailing rates to Calcutta and Bombay will be regulated, as far as possible, without partiality to either port, on the principle of fair and equal profits on the lines of railway which serve them respectively." If this principle is fairly applied, it is clear from the published accounts of the different lines of railway, that the East Indian Company ought to reduce their rates very considerably. Not only are their working expenses less per ton per mile than those of any other line in India, but their profits are greater, as the following comparison between the four lines connected with the

North-West, which serve Calcutta and Bombay respectively, will show :—

	Working expenses per ton per mile 1880-81.	Nett profits 1880.
East Indian Railway ...	·240d.	8·71 p. c.
Bombay and Baroda Railway ...	·400d.	5·72 „
Great Indian Peninsula Railway ...	·542d.	4·44 „
Rajpootana State Railway ...	·843d.	3 62 „

The above figures show that the East Indian Railway might reduce its rates by 25 per cent. and still earn a better profit than the lines which serve Bombay. Considering the natural advantages of position Bombay possesses, and that her port is so much cheaper and more accessible than Calcutta, we can only hope to compete with her for the North-West trade by getting the full benefit of our cheaper railway communication. The impetus given to trade by cheap railway rates was strikingly shown during the past rainy season, when a low tariff for grain and seeds was in operation. The quantity carried by the railway during that period was only limited by the rolling-stock and shed accommodation at their command. It is desirable on every ground that there should be a thorough overhauling of the East Indian Railway goods tariff at once, with a view to reduce rates of carriage on all goods before any further diversion occurs.

With regard to new projects for railway extension, the Committee took the lead in August last in pressing the subject of railway communication with Assam and Cachar on the attention of his Honor the Lieutenant-Governor. The deputation from the Chamber which waited upon His Honor was joined by similar deputations from the Trades' Association and the British Indian Association, and the three Bodies united to present an address urging the construction of a railway from Naraingunge by Dacca and Mymensingh to Gowhatty, with a branch to Sylhet and Cachar. The Lieutenant-Governor's reply was satisfactory, as showing that Government are fully alive to the necessity for such a railway, and orders have since been issued for a survey during the present cold weather of the country through which the line will pass with a view to determine the best route for it to take. When the results of this survey are made known, it is to be hoped capital will be forthcoming for the construction of the line.

In view of the opposition lately raised in some quarters to the special legislation which is still necessary to regulate emigration to Assam and to protect both planters and labourers in their engagements with each other, it is of very great importance to push forward the work of opening up

railway communication with Assam and Cachar. I have never concealed my own opinion that with the opening of such a railway the necessity for a Bill such as the one lately passed will disappear, and both planters and coolies will be far better off without any special law, if an Act providing for the punishment of breaches of contract which now applies to some parts of India is extended to the tea districts. The less interference there is by Government in such matters, and the more parties are left entirely free to arrange with each other, the better will it be both for employers and employed. On every ground, therefore, I look on a railway to Assam and Cachar as one of the first importance to all interested in these districts.

Another line in which the Calcutta public are very much interested, is a direct railway from Calcutta to Bombay. The Committee addressed the Government of India upon this subject in November last, in connection with the extension of the Nagpore and Chutteesgurh State Railway to Nundgaon which was recently sanctioned. A continuation of the line to Raipur and Bilaspur has been estimated for, and the question of the extension from Bilaspur to join the Bengal system of railways is now under the consideration of Government. With a view to determine the route to be followed between Calcutta and Bilaspur,

surveys are, it is understood, being carried out, during the present cold season, of the country *viâ* Midnapore and *viâ* Burrakur respectively, these being the two alternative routes proposed. The Committee have expressed a decided preference for the Midnapore route, as it is nearly 100 miles shorter than the other. Both routes converge near Sumbulpore, but while the distance from Howrah to Sumbulpore *viâ* Burrakur is 387 miles, the distance from Howrah to Sumbulpore *viâ* Midnapore is only 292 miles. Unless insuperable obstacles exist on the Midnapore route, the Committee are decidedly of opinion it is the one which should be followed.

A matter of even greater importance than the precise route, is the gauge which may be adopted. The Committee are very strongly of opinion that a vital mistake has been made in constructing the Nagpore and Chutteesgurh line so far on the narrow gauge. Fortunately a length of only 53 miles has been opened for traffic, and the Committee have asked Government to consider whether, in view of the proved inferiority of the metre gauge when applied to a trunk line, such as this will be, it would not be advisable to relay the portion already opened and construct the rest of the line as a broad gauge one, before incurring further expense in laying down any addition mile-

age on the metre gauge. It will prove, in our opinion, a serious and costly blunder if a line, such as this, which must eventually become one of the main trunk lines of India, is not from the outset constructed as a broad gauge one. Should the metre gauge be persisted with and the line take the Burrakur route, there will be a double break of gauge between Calcutta and Bombay, first at Burrakur and again at Nagpore, which would be simply intolerable. If the line proceeds direct from Howrah *viâ* Midnapore the inconvenience would be reduced to a single break at Nagpore, but even that ought not to be contemplated in view of the proved mistake of such a system on the Rajputana line. The increased cost of constructing the line as a broad gauge one will be far more than repaid by increased earnings and cheaper working. The figures recently published regarding Indian railways amply prove this. They show the average nett profits of the broad gauge lines in 1880 to have been 5·28 per cent., against 2·65 per cent. for the metre gauge lines.

A third line which will no doubt prove advantageous to Calcutta is the Central Bengal Railway. A very pleasing feature in connection with this line is that the promoters are large English capitalists, whose direct connection in this way

with Indian railways will, it is to be hoped, induce others to come forward to take up some of the many schemes which are waiting to be carried out. The Government will do well to offer liberal concessions to any responsible parties who may offer to embark in railway undertakings in this country. There is nothing the country wants so much as to be opened up throughout its whole extent by means of good internal communications, and every encouragement should be given to the investment of both Native and European capital in a work of such importance.

The members of the Chamber who are specially interested in the tea industry are to be congratulated on the success of the efforts made by the Tea Syndicate to introduce Indian tea into the markets of Australia and America, upon the formation of a Tea Association to protect the interests of those concerned, and on the passing of the Inland Emigration Bill. If the prospects of the industry are brighter than they were twelve months ago, it is very much owing to the united and hearty way in which all interested have of late worked together for the common good. It is greatly to be desired that this state of things should continue, and that efforts should not be relaxed while so much remains to be done to put the industry on a secure footing.

The manner in which stores for the public service are now procured was the subject of correspondence between the Chamber and Government in July last. The Committee recommended that in future Government should procure all supplies by advertising for tenders simultaneously in England and India, giving preference to local tenders for equal value at equal cost. It was pointed out that, by adopting this method, Government would, among other advantages, be able to dispense with the costly establishments maintained in England for buying and shipping, and in India for landing and transporting stores. Although the Govern ment have not seen their way to adopt the Chamber's proposal in its entirety, a beginning has been made in the direction recommended, and it is to be hoped the result of the experiments now being made will encourage them to extend the wiser policy lately introduced.

A correspondence between the Committee and the Manchester Chamber on the subject of the measuring and stamping of lengths on Manchester cotton piece-goods deserves notice. Certain irregular practices appear to have crept in of late years which are condemned alike by the Cham bers of Commerce in India and Manchester. Goods are admittedly measured in some cases in Manchester by a short stick purporting to be a

yard of 35½ instead of 36 inches, and are stamped as containing more than their actual length. The dealers in the presidency towns are not deceived by these marks in cases where a length is stamped which is more than the actual measurement of the piece, but it is to be feared the ultimate buyer up-country is in many cases misled by them. The practice, although of old standing, is quite indefensible, and the Committee trust the publicity given to the matter will lead to its being discountenanced and discontinued by all parties engaged in the trade.

A proposal was submitted to the Committee by Mr. H. Reinhold some months ago for the erection of a Mercantile Exchange. Before moving in the matter the Committee circulated the proposal for the opinions of members of the Chamber, and these being, in the main, favourable to the scheme a communication was sent in to Government on the subject. The Committee have not yet received a definite reply to their letter to the Lieutenant-Governor, but they understand the subject is under consideration. Should the Government of Bengal see their way to help to the extent proposed, the Committee believe a sufficient number of subscribers would come forward to ensure the success of the undertaking. As to the advantages of the scheme to the commercial

community, I believe they are not at all overstated by Mr. Reinhold in his letter to the Committee which will be found in the report.

The question of a uniform bill of lading for steamships from Calcutta to London and Liverpool was lately before the Chamber. The subject was first brought before the Committee in June last, asking that a special meeting might be convened to discuss the matter. The Committee's suggestion that, as a preliminary step, a special committee of four gentlemen should be appointed to consider the subject was acted upon. The thanks of the Chamber are due to this special committee for the amount of labour they bestowed and for the elaborate report they drew up. It was considered at a special general meeting of members held on 23rd November, and resolutions were then passed asking the committee of merchants in London who previously acted in settling the form of the sailing ship bill of lading to discuss and settle the form and conditions of a bill of lading for steamers. If the result of the London Committee's labours is the introduction of a uniform steam ship bill of lading accepted by all the lines trading to this port, it will be a very satisfactory termination to the question.

Another matter which the Committee are now considering is the inconvenience caused to business by the Doorga Poojah holidays, and the closing, during the whole twelve days the holidays continued last year, of the Government Currency Office. Two years ago, on a similar occasion to the present, I congratulated the Chamber on what we then thought was a final settlement of the question. The Government of India at that time decided that the holidays were to be restricted to the four days required for strictly religious purposes, with effect from 1880. In consequence of the protests made by the Native community this order was never acted on. We all feel that it is a matter of some difficulty to reconcile the two conflicting interests in this matter. On the one hand, it is an undoubted fact that serious inconvenience and loss is caused in many cases by these holidays when they extend to twelve close days as at present. On the other hand, we do not wish to deprive native employés in public and mercantile offices of the holidays to which they have long been accustomed. It is eminently a matter in which a compromise is desirable, and I think if the Government order of 4th October 1879, limiting the holidays to four close days, had dealt with the matter more in a spirit of compromise,

it would not have failed as it has done to solve the difficutly. As the Committee are still in correspondence with members of the Chamber on the general question, it would be premature on my part to commit the Chamber to an expression of opinion on the subject. On one point, however, there is no difference of opinion. The order which directed the closing of the Currency Office for twelve days when it was known the Custom House and Bank of Bengal were both to be open for business during a portion of that period, exhibited a singular amount of offical indifference to public convenience.

The Stowaways Bill recently introduced into the Supreme Legislative Council has also engaged our attention. It seems to the Committee that the proposed legislation is based on altogether insufficient grounds, and that no necessity exists for any special enactment on this subject. The liabilities the Bill proposes to lay upon, Agents of ships are in the Committee's opinion quite unjust, and they have, in addressing Government on the subject, given expression to these views.

The question of stamping foreign bills of lading has been raised by a recent order of the Collector of Customs. The rule in England

with regard to such documents is that when they bear the stamp requisite by law at the place of issue, nothing else is needed. It is only in the case of their being unstamped or insufficiently stamped that the English law requires any stamp to be impressed on foreign bills of lading. That the framers of the Indian Stamp Act intended to follow the English custom in this respect is, I think, evidenced by the fact that the question has only now been raised, thirteen years after the first Stamp Act came into operation, and three years after the amended Act became law. It is quite possible that the present Act, if strictly interpreted, does warrant the imposition of a stamp, but as the claim, if it exists, seems to have arisen through inadvertence, and has not hitherto been enforced, it should be deemed to have lapsed. If, however, contrary to English precedent, Government decline to waive an obsolete claim, they will surely, at all events, sanction a less vexatious procedure than that laid down by the Collector. An adhesive stamp which could be obliterated at the Custom House would surely meet the case, or if an impressed stamp is imperative under the Act, facilities for procuring such might be provided at the Custom House without any trouble or expense to Government.

The Chamber are indebted to Mr. Stephen Ralli and the other gentlemen who represented them at a Conference of Delegates from Colonial and other Chambers of Commerce on the subject of British and Inter-colonial tariffs held in London last spring. The addresses delivered by the Indian delegates at the Conference have been by inadvertence omitted from the first issue of the present report, but will appear when the remaining copies are printed.

The question of the duties on cotton piece-goods has lately come up for discussion, in connection with a rumour that Government intended to reimpose the income-tax to make good the loss of revenue the abolition of the cotton duties would entail. If any such purpose was ever entertained by responsible members of the Indian Government, either in this country or at home, it is not likely to be carried out in the face of the unanimous expressions of disapproval with which the idea has been met in all quarters. It is felt, as the *Economist* puts it, that "to replace a bad tax by a worse one is a very unwise proceeding." Indeed, having regard to the peculiar circumstances of this coun try, itwould be something worse than a mere blunder. I have always regretted that when the present Government set themselves to repair the mistakes made

by their predecessors, they did not do justice to India in the matter of these cotton duties regardless of Manchester opinion on the subject. A mistake, it is now seen, was made in 1878 in abolishing the duty on certain classes of grey goods and retaining it on others. The fairer plan would have been to have reduced the rate all round. This became evident very soon after the new system was introduced, and the present Government had an opportunity two years ago, when they took office, to rectify the mistake, but they neglected to avail themselves of it. What would have caused a comparatively small disturbance then, is now, however, very much more difficult, and it seems to be felt that the only remedy for the present inequalities is the total abolition of the duty on grey goods. If this can be conceded without any increase of direct taxation no one will complain, but the tax-payers of India will have strong and just grounds of complaint against the Government, if in order to relieve cotton goods forms of taxation obnoxious to them are resorted to. It would be far better to bear with these inequalities for some time longer than that Government should forfeit the confidence of the people of this country in a matter with regard to which native opinion is, not without reason, suspicious as to the motives which influence the ruling power.

The country generally is to be congratulated on good harvests and freedom from external complications. Whatever may be the opinion of those who look at the position of India mainly from a military point of view, I think the trading classes are generally grateful to the present Government for the quiet and unambitious policy it has pursued and for the peaceful prospect it has given to the country. A warlike and aggressive policy is often popular until the cost comes to be reckoned, but it seldom survives the presentation of the bill. I hope the year we have entered upon will be a prosperous one for Indian trade generally, and that good progress will be made in carrying on the process of internal improvement of which the country stands so much in need.

I beg to move the adoption of the report.

Mr. J. Horne seconded the motion.

Mr. G. H. Morrison said—I think, Sir, that we have reason to be much indebted to you for the thoroughly practical character of the address to which we have listened. Perhaps the most important of the subjects with which you have dealt is the diversion of our trade to Bombay. No doubt that Port has great natural advantages, chief amongst which is its proximity to Europe.

The shipowner who trades to Bombay has a voyage, out and home, 14 days shorter than his neighbour who runs his steamer to Calcutta. Hence arise savings to Bombay friends in freight and insurance and otherwise, such as promise to give them command of the traffic to and from the North-West.

I am, however, not amongst those who despair of Calcutta. If the Western Port has natural allies, so have we. There is the East Indian Railway cheaply worked, and with cheap coal. Our Chairman has shewn how greatly it could afford to reduce its rates, and if it were to do so, I believe that traffic would so respond, that the dividends would suffer no diminution.

Then there is our marvellous soil. The traveller across India during the dry months, after traversing for weary hours plains utterly arid, over which Pharoah's lean kine, with their mummied attendants, search in vain for a blade of grass, falls asleep, and wakes in Lower Bengal, a land overflowing with water, verdant with vegetation, and instinct with life. Nor does he gaze on any exceptional sight. Far away, over a scarcely limitable area, nature is unspeakably fertile. I believe, Sir, that when the railways now in course of construction or projected to-

wards Assam, through Central Bengal, and Central India, and I hope also through the upper districts of Orissa and elsewhere—when these great systems are complete—our difficulty will then be rather to accommodate our newly acquired trade than to regain that which we are losing.

I hope, too, that something may be done to lessen, if we cannot altogether remove, our drawbacks. There was, some years ago, a project for opening up for steamers of large draft a passage through the Straits of Paumben, and everything then elicited went to shew that the undertaking would be neither difficult nor costly. I trust it may yet be earnestly taken in hand; for it would shorten by some $3\frac{1}{2}$ days the 14 which now handicap us.

Then it is known that Government are once more considering the feasibleness of constructing docks at Diamond Harbour. It may or may not be practicable to carry out this idea, and, if the docks were made and proved successful, the effects might be serious, not only on our large port estate, but on property about Calcutta generally. Still there is at least the possibility of the scheme being put through, and the revolution which it would create in trade, and the help which we should receive from it in our

competition with the West, would, I believe, be very marked.

Altogether, then, I see no grounds for despondency in casting the horoscope of our future. None the less, however, does it behove us to be watchful, to aid so far as we may in developing every branch of our commerce, and to be instant in urging upon the Railway and upon the Port Trust the necessity for giving us the full benefit of such reductions in charges as may from time to time be found possible.

Mr. J. N. Stuart stated that there was a subject which had been before them, though not this year, and that was the equalization of the salt duties.

In 1880 a discussion took place between the Government and the Chamber, and he thought that the Financial Member, Major Baring, made a reference to it in the last Budget, but nothing seemed to have been done; he would suggest that the Committee should again draw the attention of Government to the subject, as there still remained some time before the Budget would be brought forward. It was a matter of considerable interest to some, and was not without interest to all the merchants of Calcutta, as increased imports of salt would give greater facilities for export of produce.

The Chairman, in reply said that he thought the Government had the subject still under consideration, and he believed that Government had in contemplation some further steps in reference to these duties. The Committee had also the subject under consideration, and they would no doubt pay it all attention.

The motion that the report be adopted was then put and carried unanimously.

Mr. G. H. Morrison, in moving the next resolution, spoke as follows :

The resolutions which, Sir, you have committed to my care were placed before members of the Chamber in a circular dated the 11th of October. They arise out of that portion of our duties which relates to the formation of a code of practice to simplify and facilitate the transaction of business.

At some period during the incumbency of almost every successive Committee, their attention has been occupied by references from merchants and agents of vessels to determine the rate of exchange proper for the conversion of sterling in the adjustment of freight transactions. These references have usually brought out considerable differences of opinion amongst the members of

the Committee, and the decisions from time to time arrived at have been far from concordant.

At a General Meeting held in May 1876, an effort was made to set this somewhat vexed question at rest. Unfortunately, through what, it is believed, was an oversight, the wording of the resolution then adopted was such that its operation was limited to transactions from the rice ports: so that we became open to the reproach of setting other folks' houses in order whilst leaving our own in confusion. It is now proposed to remedy this mistake, and with that object I ask leave to move the following resolutions:—

"That the resolutions adopted 31st May 1876, respecting conversion into Indian currency of sterling freight and commission thereon, be hereby rescinded, and that the following resolutions be substituted in their stead, with immediate effect, *viz.*:—

"That, in the absence of any stipulation to the contrary, sterling freight payable in Calcutta, including differences of freight adjusted in Calcutta, and all commissions on sterling freight made payable at Calcutta or there brought into account, shall be reduced into Indian money at the rate of exchange for Bank Bills on London

on demand which shall have been current on the mail-day next preceding the day when the amount to be dealt with shall be ascertained.

2. "That, in the absence of anything to the contrary expressed, the words 'current rate of exchange' shall be held to mean the rate current for Bank Bills on London payable on demand."

These resolutions, though nominally rescinding the former resolutions, are not repugnant to them, but re-affirm them in a form which extends their operation to Calcutta transactions.

It would probably be convenient to add another resolution as follows, *viz.* :—

3. "That for the purpose of charging commission or adjusting differences, freight expressed in dollars (American) shall be converted into sterling at a uniform rate of fifty pence per dollar."

We should then have uniform rules of practice in dealing with all questions of freight.

As regards the payment of inward freight, and also as regards the charging of commission, we have but formally placed on record that which has long been the custom. The only possible question, therefore, is as to adjustment of differences on outward charters. No doubt in this case there is room for argument, and the Com-

mittee do not pretend that the rule they offer for your adoption is theoretically exact. But it would be very difficult to find any single basis of settlement which would be so. For instance, that which served for sailing ships would not do for steamers, and so on. But, to use the words of the circular letter: "The Committee submit that the practical value of such discussions is very small, and that they may safely be set aside in order to obtain the advantage of uniformity in settlements of all questions of freight."

"It is not difficult for a merchant to obviate the existence of any difference of freight as against himself, and, in case he thinks it worth while, he can always stipulate in his charter-party for a particular mode of settlement."

I trust, therefore, that the resolutions which I now submit may commend themselves to this meeting.

MR. R. WILLIAMSON seconded the resolutions, which were put and carried unanimously.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman—on the motion of MR. J. N. STUART—concluded the proceedings of the meeting.

H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Report of the Committee for the half-year ended 31st October 1881.

THE Committee submit their Report on the principal subjects which have had their attention during the past half-year.

INLAND EMIGRATION BILL.

The Committee hoped to have been able to announce that this measure had become law, but at the eleventh hour an opposition was raised on the part of the British Indian Association which has delayed the passing of the Bill. The representations made on behalf of employers of labour have received due consideration at the hands of Government, and the Committee are satisfied full justice will be done to the claims of labourers. The objections which have been raised at the last moment to the Bill are many of them founded on misconceptions, as the proposed measure is substantially a re-enactment of the

law now in existence, which has worked, on the whole, satisfactorily for sixteen years. The only changes are those which experience has shown to be necessary, and they are all in the direction of giving greater freedom of contract to both employer and employed.

No. 265.

Copy forwarded to the Secretary to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, for favor of an early expression of the opinion of the Chamber on the provisions of the Bill. It is requested that the reply may be submitted within 10 days of the receipt of this Endorsement.

By order of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

CHAS. S. BAYLEY,
Offg. Under-Secy. to Govt. of Bengal.

CALCUTTA:
GENERAL DEPARTMENT;
Inland Emigration.
The 19th Sept. 1881.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 27th September 1881.

With reference to your Endorsement No. 265, forwarding for the opinion of the Chamber a copy of "the Inland Emigration Bill 1881," I am instructed to say that the Committee have been favored by the Tea Association with

a copy of the letter addressed to the Government of India by that Association with reference to this Draft Act, and as those members of the Chamber to whom Inland Emigration is a matter of interest are for the most part, if not all of them, members of the Tea Association, my Committee do not think it necessary to offer any separate opinion.

I am therefore directed to submit to his Honor a copy of the letter in question, and to say that the representations therein put forward have the support of my Committee.

From Indian Tea Association to the Government of India.

Calcutta, 26th September 1881.

A special meeting of the Committee of the above Association having been called to consider the Draft of the Inland Emigration Bill, I am directed to submit the following remarks for the consideration of Government.

I would premise that the Committee had the advantage of conferring with three of the four gentlemen who acted as non-official members of the Commission which sat in December last, and drew up a Bill to amend the Labour Districts Emigration Act, on which the measure now under consideration is based. The remarks which follow are concurred in by the three members of the Commission referred to, and embody the experience of gentlemen who have had a practical acquaintance with the working of the system of Inland Emigration and the re-engagement of time-expired labourers in the tea districts for a great many years.

Section 3.—The definition of labourer, if taken in connection with section 72, may be construed so as to prevent free emigration, and the Committee are of opinion the words "it also includes any person intending to enter into any such labour contract" are unduly wide in their scope, and require modification. The first half of the definition seems to the Committee to cover all that is really necessary.

Section 7.—The Committee notice the omission of "registering officers" from the list of persons the local Government may appoint. This they believe must be an oversight, as, apart from the question of the place of registration, it is admitted on all hands that an increased number of officers and greater facilities for registration are imperatively required.

Section 8.—This section is put in as a "saving of free emigration," and is no doubt considered sufficient for that purpose by the framers of the bill. A practical aquaintance with the working of the present law has, however, convinced the Committee that nothing short of an express declaration of the legality of free emigration in unequivocal terms will prevent some district officers from putting obstacles in the way of such a movement. The words inserted by the Commssioners in Section 11 of their Draft Act were meant to meet this, *viz.*, "nothing in this Act shall be construed to prevent the emigration of natives of India to the labour districts, at their own expense or at the expense of any other person, otherwise than under the provisions of this Act." It is known to the Committee that a body of intending emigrants were prevented from proceeding to the Darjeeling Terai a few weeks ago, the

sirdar who was sent down to escort them having been interfered with by the police, and obliged to return empty-handed after spending a good deal of money, although there was no charge brought against him. The people referred to were essentially free emigrants, and there was no question raised as to putting them under contracts of any sort. The employer who wanted the labour simply offered to pay the expenses of the people to the garden, and give them employment as free labourers when they arrived there. If ever the more outlying Tea Districts are to attain the position of being able to do without special legislation of the kind now under consideration, it must be by an extension of the system of assisted free emigration, and the Committee have always understood that Government were much in favor of such a system. It is, therefore, all important that an express declaration to that effect for the guidance of district officers should be inserted in the bill.

Sections 32 *and* 66.—The Committee deprecate extremely the introduction of the words "coercion," "undue influence" and "mistake" into these sections, as giving a much wider discretion to the magistrate than is desirable, or than is allowed under the existing law. The only terms used in the present Act are "fraud" and "misrepresentation," and the experience of a series of years has shown that these are sufficient, when combined with the other conditions laid down, to protect the intending emigrant.

Section 36 seems unduly strict as regards the words "or induce, or attempt to induce, him to go to a depôt," and "or aid, or attempt to aid, him in going to a depôt." As

recruiting is now carried on these words will render it impossible for a contractor to carry on his business.

Section 65.—The Committee view with great concern the unwillingness of Government to adopt the recomendations of the Commission on the subject of registering coolies. The arguments in favor of the relaxation of the present system are so clearly and ably stated in the letter from the Government of Bengal to the Secretary to the Home Department, dated 1st July last, that the Committee can add but little to that representation. The inconveniences and difficulties which at present exist in connection with the registration of labourers are also recognised by Hon'ble Mr. Rivers Thompson in the remarks made by him in introducing the bill into Council, and he has suggested that special agencies for this work might be established in suitable localities which would facilitate the despatch of intending emigrants and relieve magistrates of duties which take up much of their time. The Committee trust that Government may see their way to adopt this suggestion. They are prepared to admit the principle that registering stations should be within the limits of the province in which the emigrant is recruited, but they contend that these should not necessarily be confined to the districts of recruitment as is the case at present, and that a large discretion should be left to the local Governments in this matter. The Commission recommended that garden-sirdars should be allowed to register labourers engaged by them either in the districts of recruitment or at any one of such stations on the way to the labour districts as the local Government may from time to time appoint, and the Committee believe that this system can

be very easily worked so as to prevent abuses. An employer would be bound to see that the provisions of the Act are fully complied with in order to avoid the risk of having to return emigrants to their homes at his own expense after having taken them a considerable distance on their way to the labour districts. As the law now stands, a coolie, even after being registered in the district of recruitment, is liable to be returned to his home from Calcutta or wherever he may be put on contract, and such being the case, it does not seem to the Committee to be making any material change in the present law to leave the place of registration optional within wider limits to be defined by the local Governments.

Section 72.—This clause has already been referred to, in connection with the definition of a labourer and the subject of free emigration. As drafted, the section might be so interpreted as to prohibit free emigration, unless a declarative clause is put in the Act, as has been suggested above, or the definition of the term "labourer" is modified. The words "or induce or attempt to induce him to go to a labour district" would prevent a garden sirdar from even negotiating with a labourer if strictly interpreted. The clause will be unnecessary if Government grant the concession of registration outside the district of recruitment; on the other hand, if the present plan with the necessary modifications as to providing additional facilities for registration is continued, the clause imposes a restriction which has not been found necessary in the past, and which it is only fair to suppose will be equally unnecessary in the future.

Section 89.—The power to license should be in the hands of the local Government, as not unfrequently it

must be exercised in localities where there are no embarkation agents.

Section 96.—Although only affirming what is now the law, was not thought to be necessary by the Commissioners. The other precautions provided for in the Act giving power to the Government to require a master to submit lists and returns of passengers should suffice without making way-bills in all cases compulsory. No doubt such way-bills will be the rule as at present, but cases do occur occasionally where it may be a hardship to both the steamer owners and passengers to detain the vessel for them.

Sections 110 *and* 111.—These sections deal with a question of admitted difficulty. On the one hand, the Committee are anxious that sufficient security should exist that all labourers fully understand the nature of any engagements they may enter into, and on the other, they are desirous that no unnecessary restrictions should be placed in the way of employer and employed coming to terms with each other. In connection with this there are two classes of labourers to be considered. First, those who arrive as free emigrants from other districts, intending to enter for the first time into contracts to labour for a term on a tea garden; second, time-expired labourers who have already completed a labour contract, and are perfectly familiar with its provisions. As regards the first class the Committee are prepared to aquiesce in the procedure laid down in these sections if Government, on reconsideration, are of opinion that the plan recommended by the Commission does not afford the needful security that the labourer shall fully understand the terms of his engagement before entering into it. As regards

the second class, however, the Committee are very decidedly of opinion that the precautions to be observed in the case of new arrivals are altogether unnecessary, and that the procedure recommended by the Commissioners will afford ample protection to all time-expired labourers. In the first case only the employer's time need be interrupted, as he could arrange to meet new recruits at the magistrate or registering officer's head-quarters on their first arriving in the district, and at once have them put on contract. In the case of time-expired labourers, however, it was pointed out in the Association's letter to the Government of India, dated the 6th August 1881, that the registration of contracts would involve considerable expense and much loss of time on employers, and also be a great hardship on labourers and their families, who would have to undertake journeys occupying in many cases several days, at probably very unseasonable periods of the year, and suffer likewise the loss of wages during absence from their gardens. Such registration would be a distinct departure from the method of re-engagement which is now in force, and which all coolies in the tea districts perfectly understand. The practice is at present for the planter to re-engage his time-expired labourers on his own garden without the intervention of either of magistrate or an inspector, and the Committee are not aware that any abuses have occurred in connection with this system. It is true that such re-engagements are of the nature of mere civil contracts, but the Committee fail to see any reason for making a difference in the case of re-engagements under the Act, all the evidence, both of officials and non-officials in the tea districts, as stated by

the Government of Bengal in their letter above referred to, going to show that time-expired coolies are thoroughly well acquainted with their rights and privileges, and perfectly able to take care of themselves in any engagements they may enter into. Unless, however, such re-engagements are facilitated in the way recommended by the Commission, the Committee believe that this portion of the Act will be practically inoperative. Even if both parties concerned were able to attend before the inspector or magistrate for the execution of local contracts, the large amount of work which would thus be thrown upon these officers in many districts would lead to so much delay in the registration of such engagements that employers would be prevented from availing themselves of this provision of the Act. The compromise above suggested is one which the Committee believe fully meets the necessities of the case, and they trust Government may see their way to adopt it.

Section 115.—The Committee notice that the following words in the corresponding section of the Draft Bill prepared by the Commissioners have been omitted :—" But no such payment need be made to any labourer who absents himself on any working day for his own pleasure or convenience." These words were inserted to meet the not unfrequent case of malingerers and men absenting themselves from work, and although the remedy they give the employer is implied in other sections, the Committee think it desirable to have it expressly stated.

Section 124 *C*.—The words "a further term" might with advantage be substituted for "a like term" in this section so as to give a wider discretion to the inspector.

Section 128.—The words " and no other person, " occurring in the third paragraph of this section would extend the operation of the Act unduly. It is an Act applying to labourers only, and it is quite conceivable that were this clause put in operation as regards all persons whatever it might cause very great hardships in some cases.

Section 142 (*i*) provides that the local Government may make rules "to prescribe the routes through the territories under its administration by which labourers and their dependants shall travel to the labour districts. This provision is new, and while agreeing that it is desirable to leave the local Government a wide discretion in the matter of regulating the routes for the transport of coolies to the labour districts, the Committee are of opinion that such power should be prohibitive only, and that while power is reserved to the local Government of closing temporarily any route which may become objectionable in consequence of excessive sickness or mortality amongst the labourers, or the outbreak of epidemic disease along the line, employers should be left free to adopt such other route as they may consider best suited for the transport of the labourers they are importing. It is obviously to the interest both of employers importing sirdar-recruited coolies and of contractors, who take the risk of deaths occurring amongst their coolies in transit, to adopt the routes on which the people will be least exposed to the chances of sickness.

Section 149.—The word "district" in the third paragraph of this section, as applied to the place of recruitment, has apparently been introduced in error in place of " local area," the terms used in preceding sections.

Section 183.—The words "or neglects" should, in the opinion of the Committee, be struck out of this section. While it may be perfectly fair to impose a penalty for refusal to endorse a labourer's contract, it would be manifestly unfair to punish, to the same extent, an employer who merely omits by neglect to do so.

In submitting the Association's views on the subject of the Draft Act, the Committee venture to hope that all questions affecting the supply of labour, upon which the continued prosperity of the tea industry depends, will be considered by Government in a liberal spirit, and that the Bill now before the Council may be so framed as to remove all restrictions in the way of the engagement and transport of labourers which are not absolutely essential for their protection. The Committee are glad to observe that Government fully recognise the benefit to be derived from extended free emigration from the over-populated districts of Bengal to the districts on the North-East frontier, where so much waste land still remains to be reclaimed, and labour only is wanted to make Assam, which has now to import a considerable portion of the food required for the support of its present limited population, one of the finest rice-producing provinces in India. With the increasing knowledge of the tea districts acquired by the populations of Bengal, amongst whom recruiting for Assam and Chittagong is carried on, and the further extension of the present improved means of communication, free emigration, if not checked in any way, may be expected to develope largely in future, and the Committee trust that the desire of Government to encourage the same may

be strongly impressed on district officers, many of whom have hitherto shown themselves opposed to the system.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

D. CRUICKSHANK,
Honorary Secretary.

From Govt. of Bengal to Govt. of India.

No. 643T., *Darjeeling, dated the* 1*st July* 1881.

IN acknowledging receipt of your endorsement No. 106 of the 21st ultimo, enclosing copy of the instruction to the Legislative Department in the matter of the draft Bill for regulating emigration to the tea districts of Assam and Bengal, I am directed to say that the Lieutenant-Governor is glad to find that the Government of India has been able so generally to accept the proposals of the Commission by whom the Bill was framed. The Lieutenant-Governor himself believes that few measures of equal magnitude have met with so little hostile criticism, and he trusts that it may be found possible to pass it into law at a very early date.

2. I am to submit for the consideration of His Excellency the Governor-General in Council the following remarks of the Lieutenant-Governor upon one or two of the points noticed in your memorandum to the Legislative Department :—

(1).—First, as regards section 24 of the Bill, and the place at which registration should be effected, I am to say that the Lieutenant-Governor himself was originally doubtful as to whether intending emigrants should not always be registered in the district of their engagement; but it was very strongly represented to him that much of the expense and difficulty attending the engagement of labourers at present arises from the delays involved in taking them to distant sudder or sub-divisional stations for registration, when they could be more conveniently taken direct to the railway for despatch. The position of the sudder stations of many of the Bengal recruiting districts, with reference to the railway line, gave weight to this objection. It was also urged that, as a matter of fact, employers were always anxious to have their labourers put on contract as soon as possible, and would not run the risk of taking them far on the road without registration, when the mere allegation of the labourer that he had misunderstood the terms of engagement and did not wish to go on, would ordinarily, under section 26, render the employer liable for the cost of returning him to his home. If the Government of India, on full consideration of these arguments, which seemed to Sir Ashley Eden and Sir S. C. Bayley worthy of attention, still think the section as drafted by the Commission too wide, the Lieutenant-Governor would suggest that the local Government should be empowered to fix the registering stations for particular tracts of country. In this way the registration of the emigrant at the place most contiguous to his home could be secured executively with least trouble to all parties.

(2).—In paragraph 5 of your memorandum it is suggested that the Select Committee should consider whether it is practicable to arrange that contractors' coolies should avoid Calcutta. I am to point out that there is nothing in the draft Bill compelling them to go to Calcutta. Depôts must be established where the local Government directs; and as it is proposed to give the Lieutenant-Governor power to prescribe routes for all classes of emigrants, it will be easy to arrange hereafter for the avoidance of Calcutta, should this be deemed desirable on administrative grounds. The Lieutenant-Governor trusts that the law will be left as drafted, wide and general in its terms.

(3).—In your paragraph 7 it is proposed that every local engagement in the labour districts should be registered before a magistrate or some other duly appointed officer. I am to beg that this point may be re-considered. All the evidence, both of officials and non-officials in the tea districts, goes to show that the locally engaged labourer, whether indigenous or a time-expired immigrant, is thoroughly well acquainted with his rights and privileges, thoroughly understands his engagements, and is perfectly able to take care of himself. It is this fact alone which justifies the extension of the term of local contracts under the Act to five years. This being so, it seems quite unnecessary to insist on the employer going miles to the sudder or sub-divisional station (which in many parts of Assam means a long day's journey) every time he wishes to engage a local labourer. The man may be resident of a village close at hand, and may very naturally object to taking such a journey. The result will be that the

law will be evaded, and much of the intended good effect of the Bill will be neutralised. The Lieutenant-Governor thinks that the provisions of sections 103 and 104 give ample protection to the local labourer, especially the power which the inspector has of cancelling the engagement when next he goes to the garden. But in fact the local labourer is, as already said, well able to protect himself.

(4).—With reference to the remark in your paragraph 8, that an appeal should be given to the labourer against the order of his employer deducting wages for inproper absence, I am to point out that under section 142 the labourer already has such an appeal.

(5).—As regards the system of arrest without warrant, proposed in section 132, and the remark that it is left to stand because it has received so much support in different quarters, and because the Bill, after introduction in Council, will be referred to the Chief Commissioner of Assam, I am to remind the Government of India that the Bill has already received the cordial support of the late Chief Commissioner of Assam, Sir S. C. Bayley, whose experience of the Province led him in fact to suggest the provision to which exception is taken (see paragraph 26 of Mr. C. S. Lyall's letter to the Government of India, No. 2065 of the 28th October 1880). The power is so well guarded in the Bill that the Lieutenant-Governor does not see any ground for objecting to it under the peculiar circumstances of the tea districts.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

A. MACKENZIE,

Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

No. 644T.

COPY, with copy of the Government of India's memorandum under notice, forwarded for the information of the Chamber of Commerce.

By order of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal,
A. MACKENZIE,
Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

DARJEELING,
The 1st July 1881.

OFFICE MEMORANDUM.

THE undersigned is directed to transmit to the Legislative Department the papers noted in the accompanying list, and to request that measures may be taken to introduce a Bill in the Legislative Council of the Governor-General, to amend the law regulating the emigration of native inhabitants of India to the districts of the Assam Valley, Cachar, Sylhet, Chittagong and the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

2. It will be observed that the draft Bill prepared by the Commission appointed to consider the amendment of the Labour Districts Emigration Act, No. VII (B. C.) of 1873, has been framed as a Bengal measure. Some portions of the Bill must therefore be recast, so as to adapt them to the requirements of an Act of the Governor-General in Council.

3. As to the details of the Bill——although this Department generally accepts the provisions in the draft

Bill which develop the plan for an extended system of sirdari recruiting, it is of opinion that all emigrants in whose case the registration of the engagement, before proceeding to the labour districts is imperative, should be registered in the districts in which they are engaged. Under the procedure as laid down in the draft Bill, a sirdar may postpone registration until he arrives at any one of the registering stations in Bengal which may be appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal for the purpose ; and thus recruits from Behar or the North-Western Provinces might be taken three-fourths of the way to Assam before obtaining the benefit of the enquiries prescribed by, or under, section 25, for the purposes of protecting the emigrant and preventing fraudulent practices on the part of the sirdar. It would follow that if registrations were ultimately refused under section 26, the employer would be put to useless expense, and the recruit would undergo a long journey for nothing. Moreover, when persons had been induced to emigrate under misrepresentation, their registration would probably be deferred till the furthest registering station had been reached, in order to lessen their inclination to return. This Department therefore considers that the Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh should be empowered to appoint registering officers and registering stations in the districts under his Government, and, generally, that the authorities in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh should have, in those territories, the same power to control the operation of sirdars, contractors, sub-contractors and contractors' recruiters, as is conferred by the Bill upon Bengal officers in Bengal districts.

4. This Department further considers, in connection with sections 17 to 44, both inclusive, of the draft Bill, that the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal should be enabled to prescribe the route which shall be taken on the journey from Bengal to Assam by garden sirdars in charge of batches of coolies. The proposals of the Commission leave the sirdars at liberty to proceed to the labour districts by whatever route they choose. But it is known that on certain routes great mortality has occurred; and, although it is believed that the mortality is least when the coolies travel by rail, and it may perhaps be assumed that sirdars would ordinarily take the railway at the nearest point, still there is nothing to ensure the adoption of this mode of travelling. It therefore seems to this Department that the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal should be authorised to prohibit any objectionable routes, and perhaps also to declare that certain places of departure by the railway shall be obligatory, so as to prevent, in the first place, recruiters from taking coolies through Calcutta; and secondly, so as to provide that coolies shall take the railway at the station which may be most readily reached from the place of recruitment.

5. In principle, the remarks made in the two last preceding paragraphs apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the case of coolies recruited by contractors and their subordinates. As already implied, it is, in the opinion of this Department, essential that the recruitment of coolies of this class, no less than of the sirdari gangs, should be subject to proper official supervision in the North-Western Provinces or Oudh, and that their engagements should be registered in the districts of recruitment, not, as is pro-

vided in section 63 of the draft Bill, in the districts under the Government of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, into which they may first come. Provision should further be made to prevent the transport of those coolies by any route which may, in the opinion of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, be objectionable; but it may be necessary for the Select Committee to consider whether it will be practicable, in this case, to arrange for avoiding Calcutta, where, it is believed, the depôts of the contractors are, for the most part, situated.

6. There is no objection in this Department to the extension of the period of engagement under the labour law to five years, on condition that higher wages shall be paid during the fourth and fifth years as is proposed.

7. Sections 103 to 106 of the draft Bill apply to all locally engaged labourers, whether time-expired immigrants who have recently arrived otherwise than under the provisions of the special law, or coolies resident in the labour districts. This Department considers that time-expired immigrants may be permitted to enter upon contracts under the Act for any period up to and including five years; but it is of opinion that under section 104, as it stands, there is not sufficient security that the nature of the engagement shall be fully understood by the labourer; and it should be provided that the contract shall be registered before a magistrate or some other proper officer to be appointed for the purpose by the Chief Commissioner.

8. It is proposed in section 113 of the draft Bill to enact that the labourers who absent themselves on any

working day for their own pleasure and convenience, shall not be entitled to claim any minimum daily wage. Apparently, a labourer who had been refused wages under this section would have no opportunity of appealing against the decision of his employer. Probably an appeal should be allowed ; but the point is here noted for the consideration of the Select Committee when appointed.

9. There are, in the opinion of this Department, grave objections to the system of arrest without warrant proposed in section 132. But looking to the support which this section has received from local authorities and persons interested, as well as from the Commission, and bearing in mind that the Bill, after introduction in Council, will be referred to the Chief Commissioner of Assam, this Department will consent to the retention of this section for the present, subject to future consideration at a later stage of the measure.

C. GRANT,

Offg. Secretary to the Government of India.

COPY forwarded to the Government of Bengal for information, in reply to its letter No. 31, dated the 7th February last.

By order,

C. L. TUPPER,

Offg. Under-Secretary to the Government of India.

RAILWAY COMMUNICATION WITH ASSAM, SYLHET, AND CACHAR.

This important subject was brought prominently before Government in August last by means of a deputation consisting of members of the Chamber and others, who presented an Address which is given below. The Lieutenant-Governor's reply was very satisfactory, as showing that Government are fully alive to the importance of extending railway communication to the tea districts, and are willing to give reasonable support to any capitalists prepared to embark in such an enterprise. The surveys now in progress to determine the best route for a line of railway from Mymensingh, to Gowhatty in one direction, and to Sylhet and Cachar in another, will afford valuable data to promoters, and it is to be hoped the time is not far distant when the outlying districts to the North-East of Bengal will be linked on to the general railway system of India. The true solution of the labour difficulty as it now exists in Assam would be to render that province more easily accessible by means of railways to the over populated districts of Bengal and Behar.

To The Hon'ble SIR ASHLEY EDEN, C. S., K. C. S. I., C. I. E.,

Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

Honourable Sir,—The Deputation which Your Honor has consented to receive from the Chamber of Commerce, Trades Association, and the British Indian Association, on the subject of railway communication with Assam, represent many firms and private individuals who are greatly interested in the improvement of the present means of communication with the Assam Valley proper, as well as with Sylhet and Cachar. The Northern Bengal State Railway now affords ready access to Dhubri, but further railway extension on the north and west bank of the Brahmaputra appears to be difficult on account of the excessive cost which would have to be incurred in bridging the large rivers which drain the Himalayan range of hills on that side of the river. The scheme put forward by the Hon'ble Mr. Prestage for a line starting from Narainganj and running through Dacca and Mymensingh to Gauhati, connected with the E. B. Railway at Goalundo by means of a steam ferry, avoids this difficulty. It also appears to offer the quickest means of communication between Calcutta and Assam, besides promising to open up Sylhet and Cachar, and the fact that it will afford cheap food to these districts by connecting them with the surplus rice producing tracts of Bengal, commends it, in a very high degree, to the support of all who are interested in the Tea Districts of Assam.

The project is one which, although it commends itself to consideration upon its own merits, the Deputation wish

to look at more particularly from the special point of view of the direct advantage it offers in the opening up of Assam, Sylhet, and Cachar. Viewed in that light, the scheme is one which promises to be of the greatest value to these districts, connecting them with the general system of Indian railways. The long steam ferry from Goalundo to Narainganj could, if the pressure of traffic rendered such a course necessary, be replaced hereafter by a direct line from Aircha (opposite Goalundo) to Dacca. The extension of the line along the base of the Garro, Khasia, and Jaintiah hills, into Sylhet and Cachar in one direction, and from Gauhati along the Assam valley to Debrughar in the other, would be a comparatively easy matter after the main line is constructed. Such extensions should be kept prominently in view in planning the proposed line, and the country to the east of the Garro hills section should, in particular, be carefully surveyed, with a view to that portion of the line being carried, if possible, nearer to Sylhet and Cachar, so as better to serve these important districts.

Your Honor's attention is respectfully directed to the extreme importance of extending railway communication to Sylhet and Cachar, as these districts are even more in need of it than Assam proper, being virtually closed to steamer communication for eight months of the year. One of the chief merits of Mr. Prestage's scheme they consider is that the main line may be so planned as to serve equally the districts to the south as well as those to the north of the Khasia hills, and thus facilitate the early extension of the railway system to Cachar and Sylhet.

Great importance is also attached to the improvement of communication with the districts named in connexion with the labor question. The great want of the Assam province is, without doubt, cheap and abundant labor as well as cheap food, and any scheme which will facilitate the transfer of the surplus population of Bengal and Behar to Assam and Cachar must greatly add to the material prosperity of the latter districts.

It will also prove of great public advantage that the coal, limestone, and timber known to exist along the route of the proposed railway, and at present unutilized for want of means of access, should be made available. The opening out of the valuable coal-fields referred to, while affording the cheap fuel necessary to reduce to the utmost the cost of working the proposed line, will also benefit other railways, steamers, and manufacturing industries in Bengal requiring steam power. This, and the proximity to the line of other mineral and natural products in the Garo and Khasia hills, together with the heavy local traffic which may be looked for in the prosperous and densely populated districts of Dacca and Mymensingh, should go far to ensure the financial success of the proposed railway.

The proposed line being an isolated one of considerable length, and with every prospect of its being ultimately extended up the Assam valley, as well as in the direction of Sylhet and Cachar, ought to be treated as an undertaking by itself distinct from others, as it promises to be one of the most important Railways in the Bengal Presidency. It is believed that many influential Native gentlemen have expressed their willingness to subscribe a consider-

able portion of the capital required if sufficiently liberal terms are offered, and as there is a large amount of money in the country available for investment, an opportunity presents itself for the Local Government to encourage the construction of the proposed work by private enterprise and local capital. It is the declared opinion of the Secretary of State for India that such works should, by preference, be carried out with local capital.

It has, however, been stated that the promoters of the Central Bengal Railway have reserved to them the option of constructing any line—other than a State Railway—that may be sanctioned between Dacca and Mymensingh. Should such be the case, it is hoped that steps may be taken to ascertain, without delay, whether they intend to avail themselves of such option, and in that case that permission to construct the Dacca-Mymensingh portion of the line should, if possible, be contingent on the condition that they agree to carry out the more complete scheme now proposed. It will be very unfortunate if it should appear that engagements exist of a nature to retard the advance of the Assam line, and if there be any such difficulty, it is worthy of consideration whether, looking to the importance of the work and the advantage of carrying it out with local capital, Government should not, in the first instance, construct the portion of the line between Dacca and Mymensingh as a State Railway, afterwards entering into terms favorable to any Company willing to complete the system to Gauhati.

Should the promoters of the Central Bengal Railway not wish to embark in this undertaking, it would be advisable that Government should indicate the concession

they are willing to make to any responsible promoters in this country who may desire to come forward to form a Company. One proposal is that Government might grant the same terms as have been sanctioned by the Secretary of State in the case of the Central Bengal Railway, undertaking in addition to subscribe one-fourth of the required capital, and giving the Company the option of taking over the Government shares at par within a certain prescribed period. One of the reported conditions in the case of the Central Bengal Railway, *viz.*, that the line shall revert to Government at the end of 99 years without any payment, except for moveable stock, seems hard however, and should be reconsidered. Another proposal is that the capital required should be raised one-third by debentures carrying interest at 4 per cent., the latter only to be guaranteed by Government: each subscriber for the debentures to be bound to subscribe in the portion of one-third as an ordinary shareholder.

Believing that Your Honor will give a hearty support to any scheme which promises to improve communication with the districts in which the firms and others represented by this deputation are interested, it only remains to express the hope that no time may be lost in taking such action as may be calculated to advance the important objects in view.

(Signed) A. B. INGLIS,
President, Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

GEORGE IRVING,
Master, Trades Association.

NORENDRO KRISHNA,
Vice-President, British Indian Association.

His Honor the LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR said :—

GENTLEMEN,—I have listened with great interest to the Address you have just read, for the subject of a line of railway to Maimansing, with branches and extensions to Dacca and the Surma valley, has long occupied my serious attention.

We have had surveys made of a line from Goalundo to Dacca and Maimansing with a branch line to Narainganj. The cost of this has been estimated at 124½ lakhs of rupees, but of this no less than 62½ lakhs were for the short distance of 43 miles between Goalando and Dacca.

In the scheme put forward by Mr. Prestage and advocated by your deputation, this portion of the line is abandoned, and a steam ferry of powerful and quick steamers is substituted. I have no doubt whatever that, for many years to come at least, a ferry will be better than a railway over that part of the country. We want fair and easy communication and not great speed, and all that we require can be provided without the enormous expense of the Aircha-Dacca section with its expensive bridges and costing no less than 1½ lakhs of rupees a mile.

From Narainganj to Dacca there is no sort of difficulty, and the same may be said of the section from Dacca to Maimansing, which would cost only Rs. 70,000 a mile, or say 60 lakhs. Indeed, the investigation into the prospects of a line to Maimansing are so promising, and the work appears to be so necessary a work, that it has already been determined to construct it as a State line,

and it is down upon the programme to be taken up as soon as the Tirhut and Darbhanga extensions have been completed. To show you how entirely the Government of India approves of this project I may, without breach of confidence, read out to you a paragraph of the despatch from the Government of India to H. M.'s Secretary of State, giving an outline of the railway works it is proposed to carry out in 1881-82 and the following year; "But in consideration of the population and extent of Bengal we have promised to place the same sum, (*i. e.*, 25 lakhs) that has been given this year regularly at the disposal of the Bengal Government, until the completion of another set of lines stretching from Dacca in the South, in two branches, to a point opposite Goalundo, the terminus of the E. B. Railway on the Ganges, and to the town of Maimansing on the Brahmaputra river. The length of these two lines is 128 miles and their estimated cost 125 lakhs of rupees. Plans and estimates of the work have been submitted to us for sanction, with a statement of the financial position of the Government of Bengal and an undertaking to meet the charges for interest on the capital to be invested. These statements being in all respects satisfactory and the importance of the line being indisputable—numerous petitions having been sent in to us urging its early construction on account of the gradual silting up of the formerly navigable Maimansing channel of the Brahmaputra river—we have the honor to solicit your Lordship's permission to allow the work to be taken in hand by the Government of Bengal as soon as funds can be released for the purpose from the Tirhut Railway extension, that is in 1882-83. We

ought to add that the extension of the Dacca-Maimansing branch towards Assam on the left bank of the Brahmaputra river is probably the best railway that can be constructed for opening out Lower Assam. It is our intention to instruct Bengal to finish this branch before it commences the other more expensive branch to Aircha, opposite Goalando."

So far the matter, then, is one of plain sailing. We then come to the question of the extension of the line to Assam, Cachar and Sylhet. I quite agree with you, gentlemen, that any extension which is determined upon should have in view the improvement of communication with the Surma Valley, just as strongly as the extension to the Brahmaputra valley.

What we want is cheaper labour in the tea-producing provinces as well as for the carriage of the produce of the tea districts; to ensure a supply of cheap labour we must not only have facilities for emigrant labourers, but for the carriage of rice, so that the life of emigrants may be made easy by a supply of cheap rice.

Now I do not think that we are yet in a position to say the exact route which lines to these two valleys ought to take. I must say that I have not had anything before me which in any way satisfies me on the subject, and I do not gather that you are in a position yourselves to help me to form a definitive opinion on the subject. It may be the case that the line should, as proposed by Mr. Prestage, go through the Garo hills, tapping the valuable coal fields through which he proposes it should pass, and so into the Brahmaputra valley, and I am, so

far as I am now able to form an opinion, disposed to think that this is the proper line to take. In that case the branch to the Surma valley for the districts of Cachar and Sylhet would take off at the foot of the hills near Shushung.

On the other hand, it would obviously be a great saving to make one line serve both valleys as far as this can be done, and a careful survey might show that a line might be carried up the Surma valley, say as far as the Jaintia hills, and then carried across the Brahmaputra, with a branch to Cachar. This is a matter for thorough investigation, and I shall strongly recommend that, before that part of the scheme is determined upon, a thoroughly exhaustive survey of the whole country be made by several parties acting under one head, and I shall have much pleasure in recommending such a survey to the Government of India, to be undertaken as soon as the state of the country will permit. The country along the Surma valley is a series of bheels and inundated land, but it seems to me that possibly a line might be found, either at the immediate foot of the hills where the river enters the plains, or on the highlands on the banks of the Surma river.

You will understand, from what I have said, that while I think the Mymensingh section cannot be commenced too soon, the further extension of the line should be deferred until we obtain a more accurate knowledge of the country and the coal fields, lime beds and forests which we might open out in one direction or another. Of one thing I feel quite certain, that a line across these hills is practicable, and is infinitely preferable to the old

scheme of a long line skirting the hills and going round a distance of more than 100 miles in excess of the direct route.

I now come to the question of the agency by which the line should be constructed. I have already said that the line to Mymensingh has been selected as a line to be made by Government, and it is intended to commence it in 1882-83 as a State railway, but I have no doubt that if a private Company were to offer to make the line on favorable terms Government would withdraw from the undertaking as a State line. And, in the same way, if a scheme is put forward by substantial promoters for extensions to Assam and Sylhet, I should have no hesitation whatever in supporting such schemes, provided that the terms offered were such as Government should, in the interests of the tax-payers at large, accept.

I have for some years past, and before the present policy of Government was adopted, strongly urged that if Government could not, or would not, undertake the construction of railways itself in some sort of proportion to the demands of the country, it ought to endeavour to induce private Companies to take them up.

I do not hesitate to say that in my opinion, in a country so peculiarly circumstanced as this country is, it would be better, in many respects, if all lines were constructed and worked by Government or under Government control. But experience has shown that this is impossible; Government cannot undertake such an enormous business, and really, now that the expenditure on productive public works is limited to the insignificant sum of 2½ millions,

any real progress is impossible, looking at all that has to be done; and I therefore think that we must look to private enterprise to help us, if we are to make any substantial advance in opening out communications in India, with any real regard to the requirements of the country. In order that we may get the lines we want well and quickly made, and that the country may reap the indirect benefit of these lines, it will be to the advantage of the tax-payers of the country to pay liberally and well to have this work taken off their hands. But I can quite see that it is possible that the country may be called upon to pay too highly for these services. Promoters have of course great difficulties to contend with in this country, and no doubt, as a rule, native capitalists will not come forward unless the certainty of a very considerable profit is shown to them, and it may thus be that promoters will be led on to ask for greater concessions and advantages than the Government ought to give. I do not say that this is the case in the present instance, but in saying that I shall gladly support any scheme put forward for connecting Assam and Sylhet with the port of Calcutta, I desire to guard myself to this extent. My own impression is that a survey will show that such a line can be so constructed as to yield an immediate and very large return, and that it will show it so plainly that there will be no difficulty in promoters being found ready to come forward and construct the lines on very reasonable terms. I hope that, if this is so, an attempt will be made to raise the capital locally. Though, as I have said, I am aware that native capitalists are very cautious in respect to such undertakings as railways, I believe that the time is coming when they will

feel that it is more to their advantage to invest their funds in such works than in land, which does not now yield the return it once did. Nothing but good can come from native capitalists taking a pecuniary interest in our public works, and it is obviously an advantage to Government to pay interest locally in silver on capital so invested, rather than have to remit money to English capitalists. There is no doubt an enormous amount of capital awaiting investment in the country, though I am happy to think that within the last few weeks a good deal of it has found investment in trade. I believe that the Government of India are very anxious to see native capital thus employed; as we must all recollect, Major Baring, in his Financial Statement in March last, said:—"Even if the general arguments in favor of constructing railways solely through the agency of the State were more valid than I conceive them to be, I should still hold that those arguments did not apply in India. The first economic requirement of India is that her resources should be developed without delay, and that means of communication should be so improved as to facilitate emigration from districts which are over populated to those in which labour is scarce. I doubt whether Government agency alone can adequately perform this task, and I hold that, in any case, it is not desirable that it should do so if private agency can be found to undertake the work. I am not without hope that, if an impulse can be given to railway construction by British enterprise, native capitalists will enter the field, either alone or in conjunction with Englishmen. I should regard such a movement as an important factor in the practical education of the people, inasmuch as it would tend to wean the natives of India

from that dependence upon Government which is intensified by concentrating in the hands of the State all the organised skill which the construction and management of a railway requires. If ever the natives of this country are to be schooled in the first rudiments of self-government, it is desirable that they should be encouraged to act for themselves in such matters, rather than that they should rely always upon that coercive philanthropy which insists upon doing everything for them."

It is true, as you have stated, that the promoters of the Central Bengal Railway have had reserved to them the option of constructing the Dacca and Mymensingh line. I am not aware of the circumstances under which this concession was made, but I understand that they have now been asked to state definitely whether they desire to avail themselves of the option or not, and as soon as I learn what their determination is I will communicate it to the Chamber.

In the meantime I can only say that I will urge upon the Supreme Government the necessity of a complete survey of the Assam and Cachar lines during the cold season, and I feel sure that Government will cordially encourage the scheme and give whatever assistance is possible. I am assured by Major Baring that in all railway schemes, whether worked by English promoters or Indian promoters, an endeavour will be made in future to arrange that local subscription lists shall be opened.

His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor then invited those present to offer any opinions or suggestions on the question before them.

The Hon'ble Kristo Dass Pal enquired whether the Government was prepared to subscribe ¼ of the capital required, and also whether it was prepared to guarantee ¾ of the interest upon debenture loans.

H. H. the Lieutenant-Governor said that that was a question he was not able to answer, as he was not authorised to state anything definitely, and he had not the power to pledge the Government of India. As far as he was concerned, he did not see that the Government had anything to do in the matter, unless they got some definite proposals from promoters offering certain specified terms. At present there was merely a perliminary discussion of the matter, and, so far as His Honor could understand, there was no actual scheme on foot which the Government was called upon to assist, and he could not say what concessions they would assent to, and what not.

Mr. Inglis remarked that he thought that the suggestions of the Chamber of Commerce were merely thrown out with the view of inviting discussion on the subject.

H. H. the Lieutenant-Governor said that the matter really did not rest with him; he could only make recommendations in reference to any feasible schemes which might be put forward.

Maharaja Jotendro Mohun Tagor said that the British Indian Association wished it to be distinctly understood that, though they supported the suggestions of the Chamber, they had not had time to consider the details sufficiently, and that they had some objections to certain details put forward financially; and when they had

sufficiently considered those details, and when the scheme was matured, they would then have an opportunity of saying their say. The Association wished it to be understood that they did not commit themselves to anything like all the details of the scheme.

H. H. the Lieutenant-Governor observed that that had been explained by Mr. Inglis. He understood that the Chamber did not pledge itself to all the details of the scheme.

Mr. Inglis replied that was so: the Chamber merely put the scheme forward with a view to its being discussed.

H. H. the Lieutenant-Governor said that it seemed to him that the first thing to be done was to get a survey made, and then, when that survey was before the public, it would rest with the public to say whether they would come forward with a definite scheme or not, taking into consideration the results of the survey, the probable cost of the line, and the profits which might be expected to accrue from it. He thought it was almost too soon now to discuss details; all he could say was that it was the great object of the Government to make such a railway; but the Government could not be asked to pay too dearly for such a concession.

Mr. Keswick, on behalf of the Deputation, then said:—

It only remains for us to thank His Honor, and I would do so in the name of the deputation for the reception he has given us, and for his careful consideration of our representation. It is satisfactory to find that the need of a railway to Assam and to Cachar and Sylhet is so fully recognised by His Honor, and the promised survey to

decide the best route to serve these districts must be pleasing to the Tea community and others.

The deputation then withdrew.

From COLONEL F. S. STANTON, R. E., *Officiating Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Public Works Department, Railway Construction, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Public Works Department. No. 753—R. C., dated Simla the 24th September* 1881.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 2707—R, of the 5th September, requesting sanction to an estimate amounting to Rs. 1,77,066, for the prosecution of complete surveys for railways to Assam and Cachar, in connection with the projected Dacca and Mymensingh Railway.

2. You will have learnt from the papers forwarded under this office docket No. 699—R.C. of the 5th instant, that this subject has already received attention. The Secretary of State has been addressed, and the Chief Commissioner of Assam has been requested to arrange for careful reconnaissance of the Garo hills being made during the ensuing cold weather, in order to ascertain whether it is practicable to construct a railway across these hills within a reasonable limit of cost.

3. This is, I am to observe, the key to the whole question, and until it has been ascertained that a practicable route for a railway can be found across the hills, His Excellency the Governor-General in Council does not consider that any useful end would be attained by commencing any detailed surveys for a line from Mymensingh to the foot of the hills or eastward to Cachar.

4. The Government of India concurs with the Lieutenant-Governor in thinking that, if practicable, a line from Mymensingh across the Garo hills is decidedly preferable to one skirting the banks of the Brahmapootra, but I am to add that the suggestion to carry the line across the hills further to the eastward, in order to shorten the future line to Cachar, does not commend itself to the Government of India, as such a line while not opening up the coal known to exist in the valley of the Sumesary, would require to be taken across the hills at a very much greater elevation, and therefore at a much greater cost.

5. As soon, however, as the route across the hills opening up the coal in the valley of the Sumesary has been shown to be practicable, the Government of India will direct that a reconnaissance shall be made for a connected line to serve the Cachar and Sylhet districts.

6. A copy of your communication with its enclosures will be forwarded to the Secretary of State in continuation of the despatch No. 217 of the 19th August last, which was communicated to you under cover of this office docket No. 699 of the 5th September, and as soon as a reply is received to that despatch a further communication will be made to you on the subject of this Dacca-Mymensingh line.

No. 205 T—R.

Copy of the above forwarded to the Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce, for the information of the Chamber.

HOWARD W. WARDEN,
Asst. Secy., Govt. of Bengal, P. W. Dept.

DARJEELING,
The 13th October 1881.

SUPPLY OF STORES FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE.

The Committee have watched with interest the increasing encouragement given by Government to local industries in the supply of public stores, but it is to be regretted that it should still be though necessary to maintain, at the charge of the Indian revenues, a highly expensive agency for doing that which private traders would willingly undertake, to the advantage not less of the public than of themselves. The Committee have urged upon Government that the best and cheapest way of procuring stores is to invite tenders both in India and in England, and to stipulate that offers shall be expressed in rupees, and that the rates shall include delivery at specified ports in India. The Committee do not ask that anything shall be bought here which, quality for quality, can be had from Europe at a lower price, but they think that preference may fairly be given to local tenders for equal value at equal cost.

From Chamber to Government of India.

Calcutta, 15*th July* 1881.

The Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce desire to address His Excellency the Governor-General in

Council with reference to the manner in which stores for the public service are now procured.

This is a subject upon which the Calcutta Trades' Association has already approached His Excellency; the particular occasion having been the withdrawal, under orders from the Secretary of State, of the schedule calling for tenders from contractors here for the supply of certain stationery stores during the year 1882-83.

In the representations then put forward by the Trades' Association my Committee fully concur; and, as the matter appears to them to be of considerable importance, I am desired to submit the following remarks for His Excellency's consideration.

The Committee imagine that it will be admitted to be the duty as well as the interest of Government—

1*st.*—to procure all stores where they can be obtained most cheaply with due regard to necessary quality;

2*nd.*—consistently with the first proposition, to lighten as much as possible the amount of the drafts drawn by the Secretary of State on the Indian treasuries;

3*rd.*—consistently with the first and in furtherance of the second proposition, to encourage manufacturing in India by buying here all stores which either are or can be here economically and well produced.

The extraordinary growth of the Home store account has been the subject of comment not only in the daily press but in Parliament; and the Government of India has in various ways shewn its appreciation of the gravity

of the fact. Very recently it has called upon manufacturers here to furnish information as to the kind of goods which they make, and has indicated its desire to be less dependent upon England.

The Committee, however, venture to suggest that the close relationship between local trade and local manufacturing may perhaps have been lost sight of. There are probably many goods which might be made, partly or wholly, here ; which are not now so made because of the absence of an adequate local demand : and there are industries in a struggling condition which would be strengthened and improved, if there were any assured prospect that the outlay needed to better their productions would prove remunerative.

This necessary stimulus and encouragement would be found if it were known that henceforth Government would procure all supplies upon public tender, published simultaneously in England and India, giving preference for equal value at equal cost to goods of local make. But even though no increase of local manufacture were to result from Government purchasing all stores by tender, the Committee would still see reason to hope that a beneficial effect might be produced on exchange. To quote the words of the Hon'ble Major Baring in his recent Financial Statement—"It is the opinion of those who speak with the authority of long practical experience that the effect on exchange of the amount which India has annually to remit to England would not be so oppressive if the bills to be placed on the market were more equally distributed between the Secretary of State and the public."

The Government of India, or perhaps, more properly speaking, the Secretary of State, appears to consider that goods not actually now made in India must necessarily be procurable at least as cheaply and as good through the India Office as through private traders whose employment is considered to involve the payment of a commission.

Undoubtedly every trader looks for some profit: but Government may not be aware that now-a-days transactions of enormous extent are regularly carried through for a commission of one-half per centum. Often, indeed, there is no commission at all, the operator looking for his remuneration to collateral advantages.

It may also be remarked that even if the officials at the India Office were in a position to buy as cheaply as the private trader—an hypothesis which my Committee would find very grave reason to question—there would still remain the cost of such a "special agency maintained for the express purpose of purchasing stores in England." The Committee are informed that the cost is very large, and they have no hesitation in asserting that it alone is much beyond the aggregate of the commissions which Government would pay to private traders under a proper system of public tender.

But it is not alone: for, in addition to the burden of supporting such a Department, Indian stores, under the present system, have their price needlessly enhanced, in various respects:—such as

1.—The field of purchase is artificially limited to England, and practically, in a great measure, to London, whereas

under public tender the Government would command the markets of the world.

2.—As already pointed out, the trader is much better placed than a Government servant ever can be for procuring cheap freight. It is unnecessary to dwell upon recent exposures in connection with the freight on railway material, but they show how easily, under the present system, the public interests may be sacrificed.

3.—The Government has now to maintain not only one special establishment in England for buying and shipping, but others in India for landing and transporting ; whereas the trader has already the necessary staff, so that in forming his estimates for supplies to Government he could, if need be, afford to ignore either the whole, or at least a great portion, of the cost of such establishments.

4.—Government must lose heavily by breakage, leakage, and the like. Of course the private trader would also be subjected to such drawbacks, but as his interest in the goods up to the time of delivery to the Government would be of a much closer and more continuous character than can be felt by any one of a succession of Government officials, his care would be the greater, his arrangements more advantageous, and his losses proportionately less, whilst competition at time of tendering would save Government from any excessive margin being put on to cover such risks.

5.—The Committee understand the Goverment is now subjected not only to annoyances but to loss—

(*a.*) through the stores being unsuitable ;

(*b.*) through stores arriving after time, and thus having to be replaced locally through tradesmen who naturally demand a high price on such occasions ;

(*c.*) through frequent, and perhaps occasionally unavoidable, absence of advice as to cost of stores.

Such inconveniences would disappear under the open tender system. Obviously tenders might be asked for in rupees, and at prices to cover landing and other expenses, and thus Government would know exactly how much in Indian currency each article would cost, it could command delivery where and when it pleased, and in case of non-delivery would have a prompt and efficient remedy.

That the advantages which the Committee claim for a system of supply by open tender are not fanciful is (the Committee understand) proved by the experience of Government wherever the plan has been fairly tried : and the Committee would like to add that some of their number have themselves found that, when stores have been required for large concerns, it has frequently been possible to obtain even goods of European make through local suppliers, equal in quality and cheaper in cost than they could be procured by indenting upon England.

The Committee have not dwelt on the question of justice to the local trader. They do not think that their arguments need such support ; but they submit that those who pay taxes in India should be encouraged in every legitimate way by the Indian Government, not only because it is right to do so, but for the occasionally more effective reason that such a policy is reproductive.

From Government of India to Chamber.

No. 2307,—*Simla the 16th August* 1881.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated 15th July 1881, in which the Chamber propose that stores required for the public service should no longer be obtained through the special agency of the India Office, but should be bought in India through the trade generally.

2. As the Chamber are aware, the views of the Government of India on this subject have already been expressed in recent correspondence with the Calcutta Trades' Association, which on much the same grounds made a similar suggestion; and I am now to refer the Chamber to the Resolutions, based on those views, dated the 10th June, 22nd and 29th July and 5th and 12th August,* which indicate sufficiently the course which the Government has decided to adopt in connection with the supply of stores for the public service. The matter is one of considerable detail, and the Government of India are now gradually examining all the lists of the articles heretofore procured from England through the India Office with a view to substituting for them articles of local manufacture wherever it is possible to do so consistently with true economy.

* Published in the *Gazette of India* of the 11th June, 23rd and 30th July and 6th and 13th August.

3. It is, however, necessary to remark on the Chamber's statement that goods can be obtained more cheaply direct by purchase in the Indian import market than through the Secretary of State. If this state-

ment is correct, the Chamber may be assured that the Government of India will not hesitate either to urge the adoption of reform in the method of supply now adopted by the Store Department of the India Office or to resort to the cheapest and best market for its supplies. But the accuracy or otherwise of the Chamber's belief can only be tested by experience based on actual statements of facts. As yet the Government of India has no sufficient reason to think that the belief is, on the whole, justified by the facts. Local Governments have been invited to shew in any particular case that rates on direct purchase are cheaper than the rates charged by the Store Department of the India Office. As yet only two statements to this effect have been made: (1) as to the prices of some goods obtained for the Opium Department, and on this a representation has already been made to the Secretary of State, and (2) the purchase of stationery for the Bengal and Madras Presidencies. In the case of stationery for Bengal, the alleged results cannot yet be said to have been satisfactorily proved. Some of the articles bought locally were certainly much dearer than the prices paid on former supplies obtained from the Store Department, and the question whether, on the whole, a loss has not resulted from local purchases is still under investigation. On the other hand, the stores obtained from England for the Public Works Department are believed to be more cheaply got through the Store Department than they could be obtained through other agency. The Government of India is giving, and will continue to give, its careful attention to this question.

From Chamber to Government of India.

Calcutta, 30th August 1881.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 230, dated the 16th instant.

I am to express the satisfaction with which the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have watched the development in the purchase of stores of what they venture to consider a wiser policy than has until recently been pursued.

My Committee would not, at this stage in the experiments which are being tried, have trespassed further upon your time, but for what appears to them a misconception on the part of the Government of the course which my Committee have advocated.

If appears to be thought that the Chamber propose that stores should be bought in India.

This does not correctly express the views held by my Committee, and they were not aware that my letter of the 15th ultimo was open to such a construction.

What they have urged is that stores should be procured by advertising for tenders, not in India only but in England also, and that the Government should thus purchase in the cheapest market, giving preference, indeed, to local tenders but only for equal value at equal cost.

From Government of India to Chamber.

No. 2978, *Simla the* 12*th September* 1881.

I am directed to acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of your letter, dated the 30th of August last, on the subject of the supply of European stores required for the public service in India.

Government Circulars in connection with the foregoing.

No. 621, *Simla the* 14*th May* 1881.

In continuation of my circular of the 28th ultimo, No. 220, I am directed to request that information may be furnished, as early as possible, of the quantities and kinds of European stores which are annually purchased in India, and not obtained from England, for official requirements. From time to time considerable quantities of such stores are obtained. Thus, in Calcutta the Stationery Office sometimes, having exhausted the supply of a particular article, buys a further supply in the local market. In Bombay, and it is believed in some other provinces, the district officers supply themselves in the market with European stationery for their vernacular correspondence out of the "petty supply allowance," a fixed monthly sum from which the office requirements of various kinds are met.

2. The Governor-General in Council would be glad to receive the information asked for in the tabular form attached to my circular of the 28th ultimo, and in

similar detail, and with as little delay as possible. The information regarding any particular article or class of articles of large consumption, such as paper, may be forwarded without waiting until the whole information asked for is complete.

3. I am to enclose copies of a demi-official circular which the Government of India desires to be forwarded to the managers of all large manufactories in each province of goods of the kind which are required regularly for the public service, *e.g.*, woolen mills, cotton mills, iron mills, cement works, paper mills, boot and harness makers, chemical factories, and so forth. The information in this office as to the names and addresses of such industrial concerns is insufficient to permit of the circular being issued direct to the managers. It will be observed that the circular requests that replies may be sent direct to this Department. I am accordingly to request that, as soon as the circular is issued, a list may be forwarded of the persons to whom it has been sent.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

T. C. HOPE,

Offg. Secy. to the Govt. of India.

Copy forwarded to the Home Department with reference to paragraphs 1 and 2, in continuation of the circular of 28th ultimo.

I shall be much obliged if you can furnish me direct, at as early a date as possible, with accurate information

as to the kinds of goods now manufactured in the establishment under your direction, sending at the same time small samples of the goods, and stating whether articles of superior quality could be manufactured, if a remunerative and permanent demand arose for them.

2. I should explain that I ask for this information to assist the Government of India in considering the question how far it is now possible for Government to go, in substituting for the present supply of stores obtained from England supplies of goods of Indian manufacture. You will kindly understand that this request must not be held to imply any promise or assurance on the part of Government to purchase articles of the kind produced in your establishment. It is only a preliminary to the consideration of the question whether a change in the present system is practicable or expedient.

3. If you wish it, of course, all the information you will furnish will be treated as confidential.

I am,
Yours faithfully,
T. C. HOPE,
Offg. Secy. to the Govt. of India.

GOVT. OF INDIA,
DEPT. OF FINANCE AND COMMERCE;
Simla, 14th May 1881.

EXEMPTION OF RIVER STEAM COMPANIES FROM LIABILITY AS COMMON CARRIERS.

The claim put forward by the Steamer Companies to be relieved from liability as carriers did not seem to the Committee to be well founded, and they have stated their reasons for coming to this conclusion in the letter given below. The Committee do not think the liability so onerous, or the Companies so weak, as to necessitate their being relieved from a liability which has hitherto protected the public generally, and underwriters in particular. As this Report was being sent to press the letter of 7th December came to hand intimating that the Government of India see no sufficient reason for relieving the Companies from the liabilities devolving upon them under the provisions of Act III of 1865.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.

Marine—No. 635. *Calcutta the* 14*th April* 1881.

In forwarding for the consideration of the Chamber of Commerce, a copy of a letter No. 485, dated the 19th March 1881, from the Under-Secretary to the Government of India, in the Home, Revenue, and Agricultural Department, with its enclosures, I am directed to request that the Lieutenant-Governor may be favoured with an expression of the opinion of the Chamber on the request made by the Agents of the India General Steam Navigation

Company, and of the Rivers Steam Navigation Company, that those Companies may be exempted from the ordinary liabilities attaching to common carriers.

2. The Lieutenant-Governor desires that the points to which attention is called in paragraph 2 of Mr. Tupper's letter may be specially noticed by the Chamber.

From F. C. DAUKES, ESQ., *Under-Secretary to the Govt. of India, Home, Revenue, and Agricultural Department, to the Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal, General Department.—No.* 485, *dated Fort William the* 19*th March* 1881.

I am directed to forward the accompanying petition from the Agents of two River Carrying Companies in India on the subject of the law which defines the position of such Companies as common carriers, and to request that you will move the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor to favour the Government of India with his opinion whether these River Carrying Companies need the relief for which they ask.

2. The main grounds put forward by the petitioners in favour of the exclusion of River Carrying Companies from the ordinary liability of common carriers appear to be:—

(1) That the dangers of river navigation in India are excessive, and

(2) that complaints have been made by various Tea Companies of excessive charges by such Companies, which charges are necessary in view of the liability of the Companies as insurers.

The Governor-General in Council would be glad if these two points were specially noticed in your reply.

From MESSRS. SCHOENE, KILBURN & CO., *Agents for the India General Steam Navigation Company, Limited, and* MESSRS. DUNCAN MACNEIL & CO., *Agents for the Rivers Steam Navigation Company, Limited, to her Majesty's Under-Secretary of State for India.—Dated St. Mary Axe, London, E. C., the* 28th *and* 30th *October* 1879.

As representing two of the large Inland River Carrying Companies of India, we had the honor of addressing you in the month of May last, respecting the position of carriers by the inland rivers of India, with reference to the desire of the Indian railways to attach to their undertakings a power to act as inland river carriers. We pointed out to you the manner in which such power might be used to the detriment of established Companies who were properly performing their duties; and we would remind you that the Bill which was then under discussion, and which eventually passed into law, was so modified as to afford the Companies we represented the protection we asked for.

When the Bill was before the House of Commons, several petitions were presented to that Hon'ble House on behalf of the various Tea Companies, these petitions in effect accusing the Inland River Companies of charging an excessive amount for the carriage of tea. We explained to you that one reason why the freights charged for inland river carriage seemed high, was owing to the River Companies being, by the law ruling in India, declared to be common carriers, thus necessitating their charging high freights to cover their liability in case of loss by perils of navigation.

Various Companies have, from time to time, been incorporated for the purpose of undertaking carriage over

the large inland rivers of India, the capital in most cases—as in fact is almost always the case with all Indian undertakings—having to be sought for from the English public. One difficulty in obtaining capital for the formation of Inland River Companies has been the knowledge that the navigation of inland rivers in India is extremely perilous, considerably more so in fact than navigation on the high seas. Up to the passing of an Act by the Indian Legislature in the year 1865, the assumption on the part of the owners of steam vessels employed in navigating the inland rivers was, that they stood in the same position as the owners of sea-going vessels, and consequently were not in the position of common carriers, but were entitled to protect themselves from the ordinary perils of navigation by means of conditions prescribed by them in the bills of lading granted when they accepted the carriage of merchandize.

In the year 1865 an Act was passed by the Governor-General of India in Council (Act No. III of 1865) which declared that all persons, other than the Government, engaged in the business of transporting for hire property from place to place by land or inland river, for all persons indiscriminately, should be deemed to be common carriers.

The effect of this Act was to destroy the position which the inland river steamers up to that time considered they held, and to make them by statute law common carriers; and consequently, as common carriers, they then became in effect the ensurers of the property entrusted to their care, and were responsible for all loss happening to such property while in their custody, of

whatever nature, unless such loss were occasioned by the act of God or of the Queen's enemies.

The Act to which we have referred was founded upon an English Act of Parliament, known as the Carriers Act, passed in 1830, but was so modified as to enable the inland river carriers, under certain conditions, to enter into special contracts in order to limit their liability, the person shipping the goods, or his duly authorised agent, being required to sign a special contract.

It has been found that it is impossible for the Companies to obtain the protection the Act intended to give them, as it is utterly impossible for the steamers to procure such signature to special contracts as the Act requires, the actual shipper being, in most cases, an illiterate native; the result is the steamers cannot obtain protection by publishing general conditions, or by limitations in their bills of lading, no matter how fair and reasonable these conditions or limitations may be, and consequently find themselves obliged to carry goods of immense value, especially tea, and to incur the liability of common carriers.

Feeling the hardship of this position, a memorial was presented in the year 1873 to the Viceroy and Governor-General of India in Council, asking that the Indian Act of 1865 should be altered by omitting the clause which made the inland river steamers common carriers, the legal advisers of those who presented the memorial being of opinion that the omission of this clause would put the steamers in the position which they formerly occupied, namely, of being able to protect themselves in the same manner as the owners of sea-going vessels are able to

do by limitations contained in their bills of lading: but His Excellency in Council was pleased to answer this memorial by pointing out that, inasmuch as the Act complained of did not fix the rate of freight to be charged for the services to be performed, the carriers could protect themselves by adding to the freight such a sum as would cover the risk which acting as common carriers entailed upon them; but we venture, with all respect, to point out that this was not a sufficient answer to the complaint. If it be so, it appears to us that the same argument could be used in order to justify the alteration of the law as it at present stands with reference to sea-going vessels, by declaring that the owners of such vessels shall henceforth incur all the obligations of common carriers. We would here again remind you what has been the result of the inland river Companies attempting to adopt the suggestion of the Indian Government, namely, an outcry on the part of most of their customers that the freights charged are unreasonable; and we would further point out that shippers of goods, knowing that the obligation of insuring the goods carried by them is in fact by law thrown on common carriers, decline themselves to insure; the Companies, not knowing the value of the goods they are carrying, because the shipper is not bound to make any declaration of value, are unable properly to fix what addition should be made to the freight so as to cover the risk of insurance, rendering it almost impossible for them to escape, in some cases, an accusation of charging an unfair freight.

Carriage by the inland rivers of India differs from that undertaking in any other colony or dependency

governed by English law; and it appears to us that we are justified in considering that the time has now arrived when this immense branch of commerce should be protected by special legislation. We would remind you that in asking for special legislation, those interested in performing this carriage can refer to the mode in which the carriage of goods along canals in England is regulated and limited by statute law, the effect of which may shortly be stated, as enabling the carriers by canal waters to limit their responsibility by general rules and regulations, subject to the condition that such rules must be fair and reasonable, in this manner putting them in a very different position to that in which they would have stood had they remained common carriers.

Referring, again, to the immense danger of navigation inseparable from carriage over the inland rivers of India, it appears difficult to understand why the steamers employed in this service, steamers which are in fact of tonnage quite equal to, and in many instances greater than that of, ocean steamers, should not be able to protect themselves in the same manner in which the owners of sea-going vessels are now able to do by law, and we submit that the request that the law of India should be altered to afford this relief is one which the Government of India ought favourably to entertain.

It would not be possible for us, in the limits of this letter, to point out the exact manner in which this relief can be granted; but we venture to suggest that the policy considered by the Home Government at the time that the recent Indian Guaranteed Railways Act, 1879,

was passed, should be followed, namely, that it should be suggested to the Indian Government that it is expedient, in the interests of public policy, that the position of those who have embarked the immense capital now employed in river carriage in India, should be reasonably protected by an alteration in the Indian Carrying Act of 1865, so as to grant to these Companies the protection which they seek.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 20th May 1881.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have had before them your letter No. 635 of 14th April, asking their opinion on the request made by the Inland River Steam Companies to be exempted from the ordinary liabilities attaching to common carriers.

You specially draw the Committee's attention to the grounds upon which this request is based, as stated in para. 2 of the letter from the Under-Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, of 19th March, *viz.*:—

1. That the dangers of river navigation in India are excessive.

2. That complaints have been made by various Tea Companies of excessive charges by the River Carrying Companies, which charges are necessary in view of the liability of the River Companies as insurers.

The Committee of the Chamber are inclined to think that the River Companies have overstated the dangers of river

navigation in India. The losses arising from river navigation proper have not been at all excessive in India as compared with other countries, so far as the Committee can learn, and in some of the cases reported such losses might have been avoided had greater care or skill been exercised. Losses have occurred from cyclones and collisions which cannot fairly be classed among the dangers alluded to.

As regards the second reason put forward by the Steamer Companies, it is undoubtedly true that serious complaints have been made by proprietors of tea estates as to the excessive charges for freight levied by the River Companies. The alleged necessity for such high freights, in order to cover risks arising from perils of navigation or their liability as insurers in case of loss, is, however, disputed by the parties more immediately concerned. This is a point which can be best decided by a reference to the financial results of the working of the Steamer Companies for the past few years. If the Government are not already in possession of the figures, the Committee of the Chamber would suggest that the Steamer Companies be invited to submit an abstract of their accounts, for, say, a period of seven years, showing, on the one hand, the extent to which the alleged perils of Indian river navigation and the liability complained of have affected them, and, on the other, the net profits they have realised and the mode in which these have been spent.

As regards the statement in paragraph 5 of the River Companies letter, that the effect of Act III of 1865 has been to make them insurers of all property entrusted to their care, the Committee are informed that European

shippers, at all events, do not look upon the freight they pay as covering insurance, but make their own arrangements to cover the risk of transit by river steamer, either here or in England. In particular is this the case with Tea, which is, as a rule, insured from time of manufacture until its arrival in Calcutta, including conveyance by steamer. The Committee understand that in 1879 the River Steamer Companies entered into specific arrangements with certain shippers to allow them a reduction of 10 per cent. on their ordinary rates of freight, in consideration of their being exempted from all claims in respect of risks usually borne by Insurance Companies, but that they, of their own accord, discontinued the arrangement at the close of last season. The River Companies further protect themselves by requiring a form to be signed by shippers when goods are sent in to them for carriage, copies of which are herewith forwarded.

The evidence before the Committee does not support the argument of the River Steamer Companies that the liability complained of necessitates a high rate of freight being charged. They are rather led to think that it falls but lightly upon them, and forms no bar, in its actual operation, to a considerable reduction of the present rates. So far as European shippers who insure are concerned, the question is one which affects them only indirectly, as at present the risk in their case is divided between the Steamers Companies and Insurance Offices or Underwriters. The latter, so far as the Committee have been able to ascertain, object to any change in the law of liability as affecting inland steamers. They hold that the abolition of the carrier's risk, (1) would deprive them

of a remedy against the Steamer Companies which they at present possess, and (2) would largely reduce the incentive to care in carrying goods, which is supplied by liability for damages resulting from carelessness.

The result, therefore, of any change in the present conditions of river transport in the direction of relieving the steamers from liability, would certainly be a material increase in the rates of insurance, and not improbably a difficulty in affecting insurance of Inland Steamer risks on any terms.

Having regard to these facts and the interests of uninsured shippers, and looking to the facilities the Steamers Companies at present possess for protecting themselves, and the absence of any proof that the liability they seek to be relieved from is unduly onerous, the Committee of the Chamber are not at present prepared to recommend the exemption of Inland Steamers from the ordinary liabilities attaching to common carriers.

Endorsed by the Government of India, Home Department, No. 1944, *dated Fort William the 7th December* 1881.

COPY forwarded to the Government of Bengal for information, with reference to the letter from that Government, No. 7137, dated 11th July 1881.

No. 1943, *dated Fort William, the 7th December* 1881.

From A. MACKENZIE, ESQ., C. S., *Offg. Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, to* MESSRS. WATKINS AND WATKINS, *Solicitors, Calcutta.*

WITH reference to your letter dated 29th December last, soliciting a re-consideration of the request made by

the India General Steam Navigation Company, and the Rivers Steam Navigation Company, for exemption from liabilities attaching to them as common carriers under Act III of 1865, I am directed to say that the Governor-General in Council, after careful consideration of the matter, sees no sufficient reason for relieving these Companies from any liability which may devolve upon them under the provisions of that Act.

No. 1737.

COPY forwarded to the Secretary to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce for information, with reference to his letter of the 20th May 1881.

By order of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal,

C. S. BAYLEY,
Offg. Under-Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

CALCUTTA;
GENERAL DEPARTMENT—*Marine*,
The 22nd December 1881.

REGISTRATION OF PARTNERSHIPS.

The Committee regret they are unable to report any progress in this important matter. It will be seen from the correspondence that communication with Government was re-opened by the Chamber's Solicitors, who submitted that, by the adoption of the plan proposed by them, the practical working difficulties which had hitherto stood in the way of legislation would be removed.

The Committee hoped that the explanations and suggestions offered in behalf of the Chamber would satisfy the Government: but they have been disappointed, for they are informed that after careful consideration the Government of India is not prepared to propose legislation in the manner desired by the Chamber.

FROM MESSRS. SANDERSON & CO.,
Solicitors to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

TO THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
Home Department.

No. 1646—*Calcutta, 26th February* 1881.

As long ago as February 1869, the Bombay Chamber of Commerce applied to Government on the subject of a legislative enactment for the compulsory registration of partnerships, and in November 1879 they obtained from Government permission to submit a draft Bill: copies of this letter and its annexure are sent herewith.

This permission resulted in the preparation by the Bombay Chamber's solicitors of the draft Bill of which a copy is sent herewith, after which the Bombay Chamber somewhat suddenly decided not to pursue the matter any further.

The Bengal Chamber, however, still considers the matter one of the highest moment to the commercial community, and accordingly placed all the papers before the Advocate-General to advise as to the practicability of getting an Act passed in the Bengal Council applicable only to Calcutta and its suburbs.

The Honorable the Advocate-General thereupon advised to the annexed effect, and our Mr. Upton having since communicated with him on the subject, and having ascertained that the Bill would have Mr. Paul's individual support, the Bengal Chamber now direct us to lay the matter before the Government of India for their early and favorable consideration.

We have the honor to be,
SIR,
Your most obedient servants,
(Sd.) SANDERSON & Co.

OPINION.

The Bill is very well drawn, and with a few slight alterations it will be rendered effective. I have not made any alterations at present, because a preliminary difficulty in the way of the introduction of the Bill into the Bengal Council presents itself to my mind.

By 42 of the India Council's Act 1861, it is provided as follows :—"The Governor of each of the Prsidencies shall have power at Meetings, &c., to make laws and regulations, &c., and for that purpose to repeal and amend any laws and regulations made prior to the coming into operation of this Act by any authority in India so far as they affect such Presidency," &c., &c. A construction has been put upon this section by the present Legal Member of Council, which renders it impossible to carry this Bill, if introduced into the Bengal Council, through its last stage of assent by the Governor-General ; that construction, so far as it applies to the present case, is that sections 19 and 20 interfere with the jurisdiction of the Civil

Courts under Act X of 1877 passed by the Governor-General's Council, and consequently the Bengal Council have no powers to legislate. This principle of construction was applied by the Legal Member to a provision in the last Excise Act passed by the Bengal Council, and led to the rejection of a certain sections which provided as follows:—"No person shall be entitled to maintain any action or suit for, or recover in any Court of law, any sum or sums of money, debt or demand whatsoever for, or on account of any spirituous or fermented liquors or intoxicating drugs not supplied for medicinal purposes sold within the town or the suburbs or in Howrah, unless such debts shall have been *bonâ fide* contracted at one time to the amount of Rs. 10 and upwards." The above section was said to interfere with the jurisdiction of the Small Cause Court under Act 26 of 1864 passed by the Governor-General's Council. I then thought and I had previously expressed an opinion that this view of the law was erroneous. It must, however, be now held that the principle of construction above alluded to applies.

Furthermore sections 21 and 22 deal with matters of evidence and enact that certain conclusions are to be used as evidence. In fact, the Bill puts forth fresh rules of evidence; the effect of these sections is therefore to amend the Evidence Act (Act 1 of 1872 of the Governor-General's Council.) The Bengal Council have no power to alter or amend any Act of the Governor-General's Council passed since 1861 according to the section of the India Council's Act 1861 above quoted. As the general utility of the Bill would be lost by the omission of Part 6, it is unnecessary

to consider the question whether without Part 6 the Bill might be introduced.

Under the above circumstances I am of opinion that the Bengal Council cannot deal with the Bill. The Bill to be introduced, must be introduced in the Governor-General's Council.

G. C. PAUL.
28th January 1881.

From Govt. of India to Messrs. Sanderson & Co.
No. 753—*Simla the 4th June* 1881.

Home, Revenue and Agricultural Department, Public.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1646, dated the 26th February 1881, on the subject of a proposal made by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to provide by legislative enactment for the compulsory registration of partnerships.

2. In reply, I am to forward copy of a letter* from the Government of Bombay and of its enclosures, showing the difficulties which induced the Bombay Chamber of Commerce to withdraw their request for similar legislation. I am to enquire whether these difficulties have been considered by the Bengal Chamber, and, if so, how it is proposed to meet them.

* No. 3168, dated the 19th ultimo.

From Messrs. Sanderson & Co., to Government of India.

No. 5748, *dated Calcutta, 2nd July* 1881.

We have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 753 of the 4th ultimo, with its enclosures, and have laid same before the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, who now instruct us to reply thereto as follows.

The "practical working difficulties" which have induced the Bombay Chamber to withdraw their request for an Act providing for the registration of partnerships have been considered by the Bengal Chamber, and seem to them far from insuperable.

The Bombay Chamber object to the Bill on the three following grounds, *viz.*:—

(1)—Its incidence on classes with which it is unnecessary to meddle.

(2)—The difficulty of providing the machinery to work it.

(3)—Its local character.

With regard to the first of these grounds of objection the Bengal Chamber are of opinion that the difficulty may be met by adopting a suggestion made by us some months ago, *viz.*, that advantage should be taken of the local License Act to define the classes to be registered; there being, for example, no necessity to register the partnerships of petty native dealers in the bazar; such small transactions as this class have being for cash, and that the trading firms coming under classes 1, 2 & 3 should alone be registered.

The question of providing machinery for working the Act might, in the first instance, be solved by utilizing the services of the Licensing officer, under the existing License Act, to define the persons to be registered under this Act in the same way as he now defines the classes under which they are to be registered for the purposes of the License Act; and, although the License Act may be repealed at a future date, a system of registration would thus have been established in the meantime, and the Licensing officer might continue to exercise his functions for the purpose of this Act alone, or, as suggested in the Bill prepared by Messrs. Craigie, Lynch and Owen, the registration of partnerships might be added to the duties of the Registrar of Assurances assisted by a slightly increased staff.

In either case the fees charged for registration would be more than sufficient to support the cost of the necessary establishment.

The third objection raised by the Bombay Chamber is not very intelligible, but we take it to mean that in their opinion it is a hardship to subject the inhabitants of the presidency towns to restrictions from which traders are free in the moffussil. The obvious answer to this is, that it is principally, if not entirely, in the presidency towns that the difficulty which demands legislation arises. The Bengal Chamber wish the Act to apply to Calcutta and a radius of ten miles round Calcutta, as many large native dealers in this presidency have their places of business some distance out of the township.

The Bengal Chamber trust that Government will, on a consideration of the above, allow a Bill somewhat in the proposed shape to be brought in.

From Govt. of India to Messrs. Sanderson & Co.

No. 1978—*Fort William,* 10*th December* 1881.

Home Department, Public.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 5748 dated the 2nd July 1881, and, in reply, to say that the Governor-General in Council is advised that the explanations and suggestions offered by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce do not sufficiently meet the practical working difficulties which stand in the way of any Act providing for the compulsory registration of partnerships; and after careful consideration the Government of India is not prepared to propose legislation in the manner desired by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

REGISTRATION OF TRADE-MARKS.

The difficulties which have attended the attempt to introduce a system of registration of trade marks applicable alike to Indian and imported European manufactures have been so great, and the opinions of parties consulted so divergent, that the Government of India has concurred in the recommendation of the Legislative Department that the projected legislation be abandoned.

ESTABLISHMENT OF TELEPHONIC EXCHANGES.

The Committee were able in their last report to announce that the introduction and working of Telephonic Exchanges were to be confided to private enterprise. Various legal and other difficulties have delayed the settlement of the terms of the license, but these have at last been overcome, and the Committee understand that exchanges will be opened in January in the three presidency towns.

MAIL DEPARTURE FROM BOMBAY.

No reply has been received to the subjoined letter on this subject. It is the intention of the Committee to press the matter again upon the attention of Government as soon as they can give the dates of delivery of the mails despatched from Calcutta up to the close of the year. The South-West Monsoon mails despatched from Calcutta on Saturdays were 17 in number this year, and of these 11 were delivered in London on Mondays, 5 on Tuesdays, and 1 on Wednesday; the 6 mails which exceeded 22½ days in transit were those of 28th May from Calcutta which occupied 24½ days, and 11th and 25th June, 9th, 16th and

23rd July which occupied 23½ days. These figures bear out the contention of the Committee that, even without accelerating the mails in any way, the requirements of the home authorities with regard to delivery would be met by making Tuesday the mail-day in Calcutta during the fair season; but that if the detention which now occurs at Bombay and other places *en route* were put an end to, it might be possible to make the Calcutta mail-day Wednesday during the fair season, and Monday during the South-West Monsoon. The inconvenience of the present arrangements as regards Calcutta are increasingly felt, and the Committee of the Chamber do not consider it at all unreasonable to ask Government to remedy this state of matters, when they are able to show so conclusively that the change can be made without affecting any of the other interests concerned.

From Chamber to the Government of India.

Calcutta, 21st June 1881.

With reference to previous correspondence in the early part of this year on the subject of the departure of the mails from Bombay, I am desired by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to draw your attention to the accompanying Table, showing the working of the new arrangements which came into force on 7th February last:—

Departure from Calcutta.	Arrival at Brindisi.	Delivered in London.	No. of Days in Transit.
Wednesday, 5th January 8 P.M.	Sunday, 23rd Jaunary ... 3 P.M.	Wednesday, 26th January ...	20½ days
„ 12th „ ... „	„ 30th „ ... 7 A.M.	„ 2nd February ...	20½ „
„ 19th „ ... „	„ 6th February...11 „	„ 9th „ ...	20½ „
„ 26th „ ... „	Monday, 14th „ ... 4 „	„ 16th „ ...	20½ „
„ 2nd February „	Sunday, 20th „ ... 9 „	„ 23rd „ ...	20½ „
Monday, 7th „ ... „	Friday, 25th „ ... 2 P.M.	Monday 28th „ ...	20½ „
„ 14th „ ... „	„ 4th March ...11 A.M.	„ 7th March ...	20½ „
„ 21st „ ... „	Saturday, 12th „ ... 8 „	„ 14th „ ...	20½ „
„ 28th „ ... „	Friday, 18th „ ... 4 P.M.	„ 21st „ ...	21½ „
„ 7th March ... „	Saturday, 26th „ ... 6 „	Tuesday, 29th „ ...	21½ „
„ 14th „ ... „	Friday, 1st April ... 5 A.M.	Monday, 4th April ...	20½ „
„ 21st „ ... „	„ 8th „ ... 6 „	„ 11th „ ...	20½ „
„ 28th „ ... „	„ 15th „ ... 7 „	„ 18th „ ...	20½ „
„ 4th April ... „	„ 22nd „ ... 9 P.M.	„ 25th „ ...	20½ „
„ 11th „ ... „	„ 29th „ ... 3 „	„ 2nd May ...	20½ „
„ 18th „ ... „	„ 6th May ... 6 A.M.	„ 9th „ ...	20½ „
„ 25th „ ... „	„ 13th „	„ 16th „	20½ „
„ 2nd May ... „	„ 20th „ ... 5 A.M.	„ 23rd „ ...	20½ „
„ 9th „ ... „	„ 27th „	„ 30th „ ...	20½ „
„ 16th „ ... „	Saturday, 4th June	Tuesday, 7th June ...	21½ „
„ 23rd „ ... „	„ 11th „	„ 14th „ ...	21½ „

It will be seen that out of 16 mails arrived in England since the change in the mail day, 13 occupied 20½ days in transit, and were delivered in London on Monday morning, while 3 occupied 21½ days in transit, and were delivered in London on Tuesday morning. In every case the Calcutta mails were detained 9 hours in Bombay before the steamer sailed; and so far as the Committee have been able to trace the progress of the mails after leaving Bombay, they believe that in the majority of cases considerable delay also occurred in Egypt. As regards the few mails which took 21½ days in transit, the Committee are making enquiry as to whether any unusual detention took place *en route;* but even supposing such was not the case, the Table shows that six out of every seven mails despatched between 5th January and 23rd May occupied only 20½ days in transit from Calcutta to London. If the mails despatched throughout the whole period of the fair season, 31 in number, *i.e.*, from 27th October 1880 to 23rd May 1881, be taken into account, it will be found that 26 occupied 20½ days only between Calcutta and London, while 5 occupied 21½ days. It follows, from these figures, that for the purpose of ensuring a Tuesday delivery of the mail in London, it is not necessary in the case of at least five-sixths of the steamers that they should leave Bombay before Friday evening during the fair season, and that, consequently, it would be quite possible to grant the boon of a Tuesday mail day to Calcutta during that part of the year, without interfering with any of the other interests concerned, and without in any way accelerating the transit *en route*, or altering the hours of departure.

It appears to the Committee, however, that, although

a Friday evening departure of the steamer from Bombay would apparently meet the necessities of the case, it would be from every point of view desirable, in order to avoid the present unnecessary detention which occurs there of the mails of the whole of India—Bombay excepted—that such departure should rather take place on Friday morning, as suggested in the letter from the Government of India to Lord Hartington's address, dated 2nd November 1880. This arrangement would also have the advantage of securing a larger margin for the punctual delivery of the Indian mails in London every Tuesday The Chamber have read carefully the letter of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company to the General Post Office in London, dated 3rd December 1880, and they can find in it no reason given against a morning departure.

In the letter from the Government of India above referred to, the hour of 10 A. M. was suggested for the sailing of the steamer from Bombay, but the Committee are of opinion that, by accelerating the transit by rail from Calcutta and putting the mails on board direct from the train at Boree Bunder without sending them to the Bombay Post Office, it might be possible to start the steamer at 7 A.M. Under the Time Table of the Peninsular and Oriental Company at present in force, a steamer leaving Bombay at 7 A.M. on Friday morning during the fair season would be due at Suez at 7 P. M. on the eleventh day thereafter, and if arrangements were made for the immediate despatch of the mails to Alexandria on arrival, the present period of 24 hours provided for in the Company's Time Table for transit through Egypt might be reduced to 12 hours. The Committee

understand that it would be an advantage for the mail steamers to arrive at Suez in the evening, as it would allow passengers to travel through Egypt at night, and also admit of the mail steamers leaving the port of Alexandria at daylight. Under present arrangements, when steamers arrive at Suez in the morning, the Committee understand that mails and passengers are detained there until the evening. If this detention and that of 9 hours at Bombay were avoided, the average time occupied in the transit of the mails between Calcutta and London might be reduced to 19½ days which would enable letters despatched from Calcutta on Tuesday evening to be delivered in London on the morning of the following Monday fortnight.

In connection with the question of speedy transit through Egypt, the Committee desire to bring to the notice of the Government of India the very great impediment which is at present caused by the inability of vessels to enter or leave the port of Alexandria after dark. The Committee are informed that the obstruction which at present exists to the entrance and exit of vessels at all hours of the day or night might be removed at a very small cost. Were this done, and guiding lights placed to show vessels the way into and out of the harbour, the Committee understand the mails could be pushed on at all hours without any detention either at Suex or Alexandria. The Committee trust that this matter will be represented to the Secretary of State for India, in order that the English Government may press upon the attention of the Egyptian authorities the necessity for adopting remedial measures.

The Committee had not intended to touch at present upon the question of changing the mail day during the South-West Monsoon, but in connection with that matter their attention has been drawn to the following paragraph which appears in the Melbourne "Argus" of 27th April last:—

"The English Post Office authorities have not yet "replied to the message of the Victorian Government "protesting against the inconvenience caused by the "Peninsular and Oriental mail being despatched from "Melbourne on Mondays. If a favorable reply is not "received before the departure of the next mail, it is the "intention of the Postmaster-General to exercise the "power he possesses of detaining the mail steamer in "Melbourne for 24 hours, so that the next mail will be "despatched on Tuesday instead of Monday."

From this it appears that the Melbourne community are so opposed to a Monday departure of the mail during the South-West Monsoon, that the local authorities had decided to adopt the extreme measure of detaining the steamer for 24 hours. This step appears to have been actually taken in the case of the mail which was timed to leave Melbourne on 23rd May, as the "Khedive" which carried that mail did not reach Galle until the 13th instant, although due on the 11th. The result of this will probably be that the mail which left Calcutta on the 11th instant, will be detained for 24 hours at Suez, waiting for the China and Australian mails which left Galle nearly two days late. It is evident from this that the whole of the arrangements connected with the departure of the mails will have to be reconsidered with a view

to the adoption of more convenient days for the large commercial centres of Melbourne, Calcutta and Madras. If the Melbourne community find Monday an inconvenient day for five months of the year, Calcutta is much worse off in having that day for seven months, and Saturday for the remaining five, while Madras merchants have to accept Sunday as their mail day during the rainy season.

In the course of a few months the Committee will have before them the data which the working of the new arrangements during the present season will afford, when they will have the honor to submit their views on the question of the changes which may be practicable as regards the monsoon months. They would express the hope that it may be found possible hereafter to grant Wednesday as the Calcutta mail day during the cold weather months, and Tuesday during the South-West Monsoon, without in any way interfering with the punctual delivery of Indian letters in London on Tuesday morning, which is the only condition the Secretary of State insists upon.

Meanwhile, in view of the notice which has to be given to the Peninsular and Oriental Company in the event of any changes being contemplated for 1882, the Committee of the Chamber would press at this stage, and as an *interim* arrangement, for a change in the Calcutta mail day from Monday to Tuesday from 1st January next, together with a Friday morning departure of the steamer from Bombay, leaving the monsoon arrangements to be considered hereafter.

The Committee do not think it necessary to repeat the arguments adduced in the Memorial to the Secretary

of State, dated the 8th January last, as to the extreme inconvenience to Calcutta of a Monday mail day during the busy season and the great benefit a change to Tuesday would confer. The figures they have adduced prove that this can be granted without in any way interfering with the other interests which have to be considered in deciding this question; and they would venture to express the hope that the change now advocated will receive the powerful support of His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General in Council.

Chamber to Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for India.

Calcutta, 25th June 1881.

Under instructions from the Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, I have the honor to hand you, for submission to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, the accompanying printed copy of a letter addressed to the Government of India relative to future arrangements for despatching the overland mail steamer from Bombay.

With the view to avoid the delay that may attend the reference to the Government of India, and to bring the matter to Lord Hartington's notice in sufficient time to anticipate any notice which may be required by the P. & O. Steam Navigation Company in settling their Time Table for next year. the Committee have ventured to forward the enclosed direct; and they request you will oblige them by taking a convenient opportunity of submitting it to His Lordship.

From Madras Chamber.

23*rd July* 1881.

I am directed by the Chamber to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 24th ultimo, in which you invite the support of this Chamber to a representation that your Chamber have deemed it necessary to make to the Government of India relative to the overland mail departure from Bombay.

In reply, I have to say that this Chamber much regret that on this occasion they cannot do themselves the pleasure of co-operating with your Chamber. The changes that your Chamber propose would not in any way contribute to the convenience of Madras, but would entail upon the Madras mails a detention of nearly 20 hours in Bombay. The existing arrangements do not altogether fall in with the views of this Chamber, for during the monsoon season the Saturday half-holiday is encroached upon. But the Chamber feel that it is scarcely possible to arrange a departure that would always be convenient to the three presidency towns, and to London, Liverpool and Glasgow. They therefore are indisposed to advocate any alteration.

From Melbourne Chamber.

26*th August* 1881.

Your favor enclosing copy of letter addressed to the Secretary to the Government of India, on the subject of the present mail arrangements for India and the Australian Colonies, was read with much interest by the Com-

mittee of this Chamber. I was already in communication with our Post-office authorities in consequence of the difficulty presented by the intended despatch of the mail steamers from Melbourne on Mondays during the monsoon months.

You are aware that to obviate this great inconvenience to the mercantile community, our Government assumed the responsibility of detaining the mail steamers until Tuesday morning at daylight; and although this alteration has not even now been acquiesced in by the home authorities, our Post-master General has adhered to it. The difficulty will cease very shortly, as the monsoon season is nearly at an end. In view, however, of the necessity for a change in the time-table, in the interests of Calcutta and Madras as well as Melbourne, our Post-master General is in communication with the London Post-office, and has suggested such future arrangements as will, as far as possible, suit the convenience of the several mercantile communities interested.

GENERAL CUSTOMS PASS FOR COASTING STEAMERS.

The Board of Revenue have desired an expression of the views of the Chamber upon a new form of coasting pass, which it is proposed to adopt under the provisions of section 164 of the Sea Customs Act. The Committee think that an exaggerated idea has been formed of the precautions necessary to avoid an abuse of the

facilities thus proposed to be afforded to those engaged in the coasting trade ; and that the conditions which it was intended to impose would protect large companies against healthy competition. The Committee have therefore urged the desirableness of a revision of parts of the scheme.

From Board of Revenue to Chamber.

No. 1012B. *Dated Calcutta,* 19*th September* 1881.

CUSTOMS.
R. L. MANGLES, ESQ., V.C.

Under Section 164 of the Sea Customs Act VIII of 1878, the Chief Customs authority is empowered to authorise the Collector of Customs to grant a General Pass on any conditions which such authority thinks expedient for the lading and clearance, entry and unlading, of any coasting steam vessel at any ports of despatch, destination, or intermediate ports at which she touches; and it is also provided that such Pass shall be valid throughout British India, or for such ports only as may be specified therein.

2. It has, however, been found impracticable to frame a General Pass* suitable to all Ports in British India alike. The accompanying form of a General Pass, adapted for use in all the ports of the Bengal Presidency, has therefore been prepared in consultation with the Collectors of Customs at Calcutta and at the outports in Bengal, as explained in the Board's report to Government No. 648B, dated 6th ultimo, a copy of which, with its annexures, is enclosed for reference.

* Annexure to Board's letter to Government No. 648B, dated 6th August 1881.

3. Under instructions from Government, the Board now desire me to request that you will favor them with the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce in regard to the form of General Pass in question, which it is proposed should be adopted under the provisions of section 164 of the Sea Customs Act.

From Board of Revenue to Govt. of Bengal.

No. 648B, Fort William, 6th August 1881.

CUSTOMS.
R. L. MANGLES, ESQ., V.C.

With reference to Government order No. 254—16 C, dated 31st January 1880, and connected correspondence, regarding the submission of draft Rules, under Chapter XV of the Sea Customs Act VIII of 1878, for the coasting trade, and the further report required by Government after consideration of the special arrangements proposed by the Collector of Customs, Calcutta, in regard to vessels plying under General Passes, I am directed to submit the following report for the orders of Government.

2. For some time previous to the receipt of the above Government order, the Board had been in correspondence with the Collector of Customs, Calcutta, regarding the conditions under which General Passes should be granted to steamers employed in the coasting trade. An application had been made to the Collector of Customs in March 1878 by Messrs. Mackinnon, Mackenzie & Co., for the grant of a General Pass to the steamers belonging to the British India Steam Navigation Company engaged in the coasting trade, and in reply to the Collector's letter, forwarding the application with certain proposals regarding the form of the Pass and the conditions under which it should be

granted, the Board desired the Collector of Customs to consult the Customs authorities of Bombay, Madras, and British Burma, and to submit a further report after doing so.

3. It was not until August 1879 that the Collector of Customs was in a position to submit the further report required by the Board. The Collector of Customs had meanwhile visited Bombay in order to obtain full information on the subject by personal enquiries at that place, and had consulted the Customs authorities at Madras and Rangoon. In submitting his report, the Collector of Customs gave his reasons, which will be noticed below, for concluding that it is not practicable to frame a General Pass suited to the circumstances of all the ports in British India, and he proposed to consider the form best suited for Calcutta only, leaving the Chief Customs authorities of the other Presidencies to deal with the questions separately with reference to the circumstances and requirements of their own ports. The Collector at the same time submitted a form of Pass and of a Bond, to be signed by the person taking out the Pass, in which he represented that the terms on which the Pass is granted may be more conveniently set forth than in the Pass itself, which should be in a simple form for the guidance principally of the master and officers of the vessel.

4. The Board accepted generally the views advanced by Mr. Maclean, and at their desire he submitted a revised form of a General Pass adapted for use in all the ports of the Bengal Presidency.

5. The proposals of the Collector of Customs were circulated by the Board to the Customs Officers at the outports for an expression of their opinion, and their replies

were again sent to the Collector of Customs, Calcutta for his consideration and remarks. Finally, the Board have revised the conditions of the Pass and of the Bond with reference to the different reports before them, and in communication with the present Officiating Collector of Customs. The revised forms are herewith submitted for the approval of Government. The draft Bond was drawn up by the Solicitor to Government at the request of the Collector of Customs.

5. With reference to the reasons given by the Collector of Customs, Calcutta, for deciding that it is not possible to frame a General Pass suitable to all ports in British India alike, I am to state that, as regards ports in British Burma, the Collector of Customs has forwarded to the Board a copy of his correspondence with the Collector of Customs at Rangoon, in which that officer gives his own and his predecessor's views on the subject. The Collector of Customs, Rangoon, represents that almost every mail steamer from Calcutta brings to the ports of Burma considerable quantities of dutiable goods which have been transhipped at Calcutta, and he adds as follows:—

"The cargoes consist of a general assortment of goods, and great vigilance has to be exercised to prevent the smuggling of arms and ammunition, ganja and opium, * * * and packages have to be searched from time to time. I cannot therefore allow any goods to be passed unless they are duly cleared for home consumption and delivered under the direct supervision of a Customs officer. I must, in fact, continue to subject all cargoes from India to the general check and control to which they have hitherto been submitted."

7. The Collector of Rangoon was, on a consideration of the whole circumstances, strongly of opinion that General Passes are neither advisable nor necessary for vessels trading between India and ports in Burma. He considered that every reasonable facility was given at the ports in British Burma to the steamers belonging to the British India Steam Navigation Company for carrying on their traffic, and that no further concessions could be made; their trade with the Straits Settlements cannot be conducted on any other system than that now in force, and to allow goods from India to pass without direct customs supervision, or to permit the steamers to remain in port without a Preventive Officer on board, would open a door to unlimited smuggling; while, if goods received from the Straits were to be passed in a similar manner, the Chinese traders would be afforded opportunities of defrauding the revenue, of which they would readily avail themselves.

8. As regards Madras and Bombay, the Collector of Customs, Calcutta, has submitted a note describing the harbour facilities and the customs arrangements at those ports, a perusal of which makes it clear that no system can be devised for a General Pass suitable for all ports of British India alike. At Madras the ships lie in the open roadstead, and goods are landed and exported from the beach immediately in front of the Custom House, and supervision is so easy that one officer is all that is needed to watch the shore.

9. The Bombay harbour is of such large capacity that there are separate anchorages for ships with free and dutiable cargoes; the ships themselves lie at some distance off the shore, and are more easily watched than in

Calcutta; while the numerous "Bunders," or minor custom-houses, afford special facilities for passing both import and export goods with a minimum of delay or annoyance. It follows that at these ports it might be possible to allow some concessions that could not safely be granted in Calcutta; while, on the other hand, owing to a considerable coasting trade carried on with adjacent foreign ports, the rules in Bombay would, in some respects, have to be more stringent than in Calcutta.

10. As regards the conditions of the proposed form of Pass, it will be observed that, generally, all restrictions except those absolutely necessary for the protection of the revenue and to secure statistical returns, have been removed from vessels trading only between customs ports. As regards vessels which have touched at foreign ports, the procedure under the Pass is a considerable modification of that provided by section 162 *(b)* of Act VIII, 1878. Instead of all goods on board being subject to the provisions of Chapter IX of the Act, until the discharge of dutiable goods has been completed, the discharge of free cargo is permitted immediately after arrival. The Collector of Customs very justly observes that to bring those steamers which touch at foreign ports under the ordinary import rules provided by the Act, would virtually render the General Pass of no advantage, and he is of opinion, in which the Board agree with him, that the revenue will be sufficiently secured by the conditions of the proposed Pass and of the Bond.

11. As regards clauses (*a*) and (*c*) of the Pass, the Collector of Customs makes the following remarks:—

"It will be observed that clause (*a*) of the conditions of the Pass stipulates that an extract from the cargo-book,

showing particulars of all foreign or dutiable cargo on board, is to be delivered at the preventive boarding-station before the vessel enters the port. This extract will take the place ofthe old Kedgeree manifest, and will check the omission of goods from the full copy of the cargo-book subsequently put in, in the case of such goods having been *ad interim* smuggled ashore.

"Clause *(c)* provides for a full copy of the cargo-book being furnished within 24 hours after arrival, together with the Passes (or duplicate shipping bills) from customs ports, duly endorsed. These will form the inward entries for the goods, statistics being posted from them. The last part of this condition is intended to provide for the entry of any goods for which the Passes have been retained at the port of shipment, either under the authority of the Government of India letter, Department of Revenue, Agriculture and Commerce, No. 141—3,* dated 14th March 1878, or for other reasons."

* Enclosure of Government order No. 879, dated 2nd April 1878.

12. With reference to clause *(j)*, the Collector of Customs remarks :—

"This condition is necessary, inasmuch as steamers likely to ply under General Passes frequently come out from England with a large quantity of stores, and are after arrival put into the coasting-trade, and it is obvious that stores from such vessels should not be landed indiscriminately, or much that is dutiable may escape assessment when the vessel goes from one customs port to another without having discharged all the stores she brought from England."

13. It is observed that the above remarks of the Collector were written before the orders conveyed in letter from the Government of India, No. 78C,* dated 15th February 1881, under which stores consumed on board vessels engaged in the coasting trade are liable to duty, were received, and they were made by him under the supposition that stores consumed on board vessels engaged in the coasting-trade would be duty-free, and would be subject to duty only when landed. As, however, duty will now be levied on all stores transhipped from foreign-going ships to vessels in the coasting trade, or water-borne by vessels entering the coasting-trade from the foreign trade, whether such stores are landed or consumed on board the coasting-trader, it will be even more necessary than formerly that the Collector should be given all necessary information regarding such stores.

* Enclosure of Government order No. 497—52C, dated 22nd February 1881.

14. It will be observed that the form of cargo-book (Q) and the form of boat-note (S) proposed by the Collector of Customs differ somewhat from the forms given at pages 161 and 151 of Mr. Grimley's edition of the Sea Customs Act. On these points the Collector of Customs has offered the following remarks:—

"As regards the proposed form of cargo-book, I purposely changed the form given in Mr. Grimley's book, because that form does not, on the one hand, provide for the supply of some information that is required (marks and number, and date of the Customs Pass under which the goods are shipped); and, on the other hand, it requires some particulars (country of produce, quantity and value) which will be ascertainable by other means—*viz.*, in the

case of goods from customs ports by the production of the duplicate shipping bills referred to in clause *(c)* of the Pass, and in the case of goods from foreign ports or subject to duty, by actual examinations.

"The change in the form of boat-note was made for similar reasons—*viz.*, that the form given at page 151 of Mr. Grimley's book is not suited to the requirements of the present scheme, inasmuch as it provides for the reception of goods on the Custom House wharf, whereas it is proposed to allow goods from customs ports to be discharged from the steamer and taken away by the consignees to their godowns without the supervision of Customs officers, and without passing them through the Custom House. All that is required for such goods, therefore, is a simple form of boat-note granted by the ship's officer, protecting the goods to the shore. A green boat-note, in the form shown in Mr. Grimley's book, will be given for goods which are to be brought to the Custom House under clause *(b)* or *(d)*, and provision has also been made for such goods coming in charge of Customs officers."

15. The Bond provides generally, under a security, amounting, it is proposed in the case of the steamers of the British India Steam Navigation Company, to Rs. 10,000, for the observance of the conditions of the Pass; for the punctual payment of certain dues, and of sums short levied or erroneously allowed as drawbacks or refunds; and for the payment on demand of any penalty adjudged by the Collector of Customs for a breach of any of the conditions of the Bond or Pass. The Board purpose that the words within brackets "not exceeding Rs. 1,000" should be inserted in condition IX of the Bond,

this being the limit of the penalty to which a master is liable under the law (clause 66, section 167, Sea Customs Act VIII of 1878) for any breach of the conditions of the Pass.

16. It will be seen that under conditions IV and V of the Bond, the Collector of Customs is empowered to require the production, within one month of the date of the vessel's departure from, or arrival at, a foreign port of a certificate (in the forms T and U annexed) signed by the Chief Customs officer of such port, showing the particulars of all goods shipped there for, or discharged there from, Calcutta.

17. The Board consider that it will not be necessary or expedient to enforce these conditions in every case, or as a general rule, but exceptional circumstances may occasionally arise under which it will be necessary that the Customs authorities should have the means of requiring reliable information of the steamer's doings at a foreign port of call. For instance, a vessel coming to Calcutta with a mixed cargo of goods from a customs as well as from a foreign port might, in the absence of the check provided by condition IV, land the whole as free cargo, and in like manner condition V would be a safeguard against the improper shipping of rice at a customs port without payment of duty. For these reasons the Board consider that, although the invariable enforcement of these two conditions would much detract from the advantages to be derived from the Pass, yet they should be allowed to stand, in order that the exercise of an efficient check may be possible where the Customs Collector has reason to think it absolutely necessary.

18. In concluding his observations on this subject, the Collector of Customs has offered the following remarks, with which the Board generally agree :—

"Such a pass as a General Pass must necessarily be of a general nature, and cannot be expected to include minutiæ of detail which would divest it of any general utility. The chief object of such a system is to allow of the rapid discharge and receipt of cargo at a port where a vessel stays but a short time, and where the transactions chiefly involve goods which are not dutiable.

"Again, it should be remembered that vessels plying under such a system are constantly returning to the same ports. Any errors or discrepancies which require to be adjusted can therefore be brought to the notice of the Agents before the return of the vessel, so that proper enquiry can be made. If at any port it is found that the vessel does not, or will not, comply with the conditions of a General Pass, it will be competent to the Board, as the Chief Customs authority, to revoke the Pass, or to deal with the case according to its nature. At the commencement of this, as in the case of any similar introduction of a new system, mistakes may occur, but practice and experience will no doubt remedy this, or perhaps suggest improvements based upon the working of the system. Matters which relate to arms or ammunition, and are fraught with danger to the State, or which concern opium, would naturally be dealt with under the law relating to such subjects. It is impossible to provide for all contingencies or peculiarities of trade which might arise at any of the numerous ports on the seaboard between Calcutta and Bombay. The most that can be

expected is to devise some scheme which will deal with the greatest and most important ports, so as to permit of rapidity and despatch at places where it is most requisite, without infringing the law or requiring more than can reasonably be demanded. A certain amount of discretion must be left to the local authorities, who will act according to the nature of any difficulty which may present itself, and after a short time local rules of practice may be framed without interfering with the principle of a General Pass, which is chiefly necessary for statistical purposes, as the bulk of the goods are not liable of duty."

19. In conclusion, I am to say that the question of securing correct statistics of the trade carried by *native craft* was dealt with in paragraph 10 of the Board's letter No. 1192B, dated 8th December 1879, and was disposed of by Government order No. 254—16C, dated 31st January 1880, in which His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor accepted the assurance of the Board that the present system secures the complete registration of all cargoes actually shipped. As regards *occasional traders*, the scheme suggested in the 16th paragraph of the Board's letter No. 741, dated 4th September 1878, was also approved of in the Government order referred to, while the draft notification, extending the provisions of section 66, Act VIII of 1878, to coasting vessels, was confirmed by Government order No. 1879—116C, dated 21st May 1880. It was, however, represented by the Board, in their letter No. 586B, dated 2nd August 1880 (to which no reply has been received), that instead of dispensing with the manifest required under section 158, 159 and 160 of the Act, as was proposed in paragraph 16 of their letter

of 4th September 1878, the observance of the provisions of those sections should, in their opinion, be enforced; and it was proposed that an order should be passed by the Board, as Chief Customs authority, under section 55, directing that the manifest—*viz.*, both the copy carried away by the master, as well as the corrected copy delivered to the Collector of Customs—should be prepared in the form of the cargo-book to be prescribed under section 165 of the Act. It was also suggested in Board's letter No. 143B, dated 22nd February 1881—in connection with the procedure adopted at certain outports, of passing inwards goods carried coastwise on the duplicate shipping bills granted at the port of export, instead of requiring the production of import bills-of-entry for such goods—that the other local Governments should be addressed with a view of securing the observance of the provisions of sections 158 to 160, and of enforcing the penalty provided by clause 64 of section 167, in order that uniformity of procedure may be attained in the matter of the retention of duplicate shipping bills by masters of vessels clearing outwards, and of their production at the ports of destination.

20. From what has been stated above, it appears to the Board that the whole of the information required for the report to the Government of India, referred to in paragraph 4 of Government order No. 254—16C, dated 31st January 1880, is now before Government. With reference to the complete set of rules for the regulation of the coasting trade, called for by Government order No. 976, dated 10th April 1878, I am desired to state that a long correspondence with the Collectors of Customs of Calcutta and of the outports has taken place, and the

Board hope that the report will be submitted to Government on receipt of replies to certain references which have been lately made to the Customs authorities at Bombay and Madras.

GENERAL PASS.

THIS general pass is granted to the Agents of the ——— to enable them to ply the steam-ship ——— Captain ——— of ——— tons burthen, official number ———, under the provisions of section 164, Act VIII of 1878, on the conditions hereinafter specified, but subject to all local laws, rules, and regulations in force for the time being at any of the ports mentioned herein.

2. This pass permits the discharge and receipt in ——— of cargo brought from or shipped for any of the following ports, *viz.*, all customs and foreign ports in India, and all ports in Burma, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Ceylon, and the Straits Settlements, on the conditions hereinafter provided.

3. In this pass, and in the cargo-book and other documents prescribed thereby, the words "dutiable cargo (or goods)" shall include—

(1.) All goods received on board at foreign ports;

(2.) All goods from foreign ports which have been transhipped at customs ports;

(3.) Goods liable to excise duty; bonded goods under removal from one customs port to another; and all other goods which are required to be sent to the Custom House;

and the words "Free cargo (or goods)" shall include such goods only as are brought from customs ports, and do not come under the head of "dutiable cargo (or goods)" as defined above.

CONDITIONS.

IMPORT.

(a).—A cargo-book in the form marked Q (herewith annexed) is to be kept on board the steamer, showing distinctly and separately the goods brought from each customs and foreign port, and distinguishing clearly, in the case of goods from customs ports, between "free" and "dutiable" goods, and the master shall deliver to the Customs officer, chupprasi, or peon, who boards the vessel at the boarding station, a duly authenticated extract from the cargo-book (in the form annexed and marked R), showing all cargo brought from foreign ports, transhipped at customs ports, or otherwise "dutiable" as defined above.

(b).—On the arrival of the steamer from customs ports only, without having touched at any foreign port, the discharge of all "free" cargo is hereby permitted immediately after arrival, by day or night, before entry of the vessel at the Custom House, without the goods being previously entered for home consumption, and without the direct supervision of Customs officers.

A boat-note, in the annexed form S, is to be given by the ship's officers with every separate boat-load to the *manji* in charge.

All "dutiable" cargo is to be retained on board until notice has been given at the Custom House by the agents

of its arrival, and a Customs officer, chupprasi, or peon has received charge of it for conveyance to the Custom House under the written authority of the proper officer of Customs.

(c).—A duly authenticated copy of the cargo-book referred to in clause *(a)*, together with all passes granted at the various ports of lading, duly endorsed with the date of receipt and quantity received, shall be furnished to the proper officer of Customs within 24 hours after arrival within the limits of the port. Goods for which passes are not so delivered to the Customs officer are to be retained by the agents in their godowns, or other place appointed by the proper officer of Customs, until an import Custom House pass in proper form has been granted for them.

(d).—On arrival of the steamer, after having touched at any foreign port, in addition to customs port or ports, the discharge of "free" cargo from customs ports may be proceeded with as prescribed in condition *(b)*, but no cargo from any foreign port, and no cargo from any customs port which was transhipped from a foreign port, or is otherwise "dutiable" as defined above, shall be discharged until the agents have given notice at the Custom House of its arrival, and Customs officers, chupprasis, or peons, have received charge of it for conveyance to the Custom House under written authority of the proper officer of Customs.

(f).—The inward entry of the steamer shall be made within 24 hours after her arrival within the limits of the port, as declared under clause *(b)*, section 11, Act VIII of 1878.

EXPORT.

(g).—After the steamer's arrival within the limits of the port, cargo for exportation may be received on board, without the direct supervision of Customs officers, at any time of the day or night, provided that no cargo shall be so received unless it is protected by a pass granted by the proper officer of Customs. In those ports, however, in which shipping-bills are not required, a general account of the cargo shipped for each port may be substituted, such account to be delivered by the agents or master in duplicate form (V) before the departure of the vessel, giving all particulars required for statistical purposes. A separate form to be used for each port of consignment. The duplicate will be returned, after signature, by the proper officer of Customs, and is to be presented with the copy of cargo-book as prescribed in clause *(c)*.

(h).—A cargo-book (in the form annexed and marked Q) shall be kept on board, and in it shall be entered full particulars, as required by the form, of all goods received on board, showing separately and distinctly the ports for which they are shipped.

(i).—A copy of the cargo-book prescribed in clause *(h)*, countersigned by the agents of the Company, shall be delivered to the proper officer of Customs within five clear working days after the vessel's departure from each customs port. Such copy to be in the form of separate cargo lists for each and every customs and foreign port for which cargo has been shipped. The conditions of clause *(i)* will be dispensed with in ports to which the last part of condition *(g)* applies, the original accounts of cargo shipped being there taken as the copy of cargo-book.

STORES.

(j).—No stores are to be landed, transhipped, unladen, shipped, or water-borne for shipment, without the written authority of the proper officer of Customs.

GENERAL.

(k).—This pass is to remain in force for six months from this date, unless previously revoked by notice in writing delivered in accordance with the provisions of section 164, Act VIII of 1878, and either the pass or the cargo-books, before referred to, are to be produced on requisition by any duly authorized officer of Customs. This pass will be held to be cancelled should the vessel ply directly between a customs port and any of the foreign ports specified therein, or proceed to any other foreign port, and a new pass must be obtained on her return to the coasting trade before she can ply under the conditions of the general pass.

By order of the Board of Revenue, L. P.,

Collector of Customs.

FORM OF BOND.

————are held and firmly bound to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India in Council in the sum of Rs. ————to be paid to the said Secretary of State for India in Council, or to his certain attorney, successors, or assigns, for which payment to be well and truly made the said————bind themselves, and their successors and every of them, firmly by these presents. Dated this ————day of————1880 A.D.

WHEREAS the above bounden————have applied to the Collector of Customs at Calcutta for, and obtained,

a general pass for the lading and clearance, and for the entry and unlading, of their steamers, under section 164 of the Sea Customs Act VIII of 1878, the particulars and conditions of which pass are set out in the schedule hereto, and have also deposited with the said Secretary of State the sum of Rs. 10,000 as security for the fulfilment of the conditions of this bond. Now the condition of this bond is that—

(1.) If the said————their servants and *employés*, shall observe and perform all the conditions of the said pass, and

(2.) If the said————shall and will, on requisition, pay to the Collector of Customs,————, for and on behalf of the said Secretary of State, his successors and assigns, any duty or penalty erroneously short levied, or that shall not have been levied in consequence of incorrect entries in, or omissions from, the cargo-books referred to in the said pass, or the copies thereof furnished to the office of the Collector of Customs,————, and

(3.) If the said————shall and will, on requisition, repay to the said Collector of Customs,————any sum erroneously paid as refund or drawback in consequence of incorrect entries in, or omission from, the said cargo-books, or copies thereof, furnished to the office of the Collector of Customs,————and

(4.) If the said————shall on requisition produce to the Collector of Customs,————, within one month after each and every steamer leaves any foreign port, a certificate in the form annexed, and marked T, from the Chief Customs officer of such port, showing all goods shipped there, together with the marks, numbers, description, and contents of the packages ;

(5.) And if the said————shall on requisition produce to the Collector of Customs,————, or such person as he shall in writing appoint in that behalf, within one month of arrival of each and every steamer at any foreign port, a certificate in the form annexed, and marked U, from the Chief Customs officer at such port, showing all goods discharged there from———— and giving full particulars of marks, numbers, description, and contents of the packages;

(6.) And if the said————shall pay to the Collector of Customs,————, before the departure of each and every steamer or vessel, all light dues claimed by the said Collector (or Collectors) of Customs;

(7.) And if the said————shall deliver to the Collector of Customs, Calcutta, within three hours of the announcement by wire of every steamer's arrival at Saugor, a written notice specifying all the ports from which such teamer has arrived, and all the ports to which she is to proceed on her next voyage;

(8.) And if the said————shall take due and proper care that goods are neither landed nor shipped to the detriment of the revenue, and that prohibited goods are not knowingly carried in contravention of the Customs, Arms, or Opium Acts;

(9.) And if the said————shall pay to the said Collector of Customs,————, immediately on application, any penalty (not exceeding Rs. 1,000) which may be adjudged against the said Company by the said Collector of Customs for a breach of any of the conditions of the said bond or of the said pass;

Then this obligation shall be void; otherwise, and on breach or failure in the performance of all, or any, or any part of the aforesaid conditions, or of the terms and conditions of the said pass, the said deposit of Rs. 10,000 shall be at once forfeited, and the said bond or obligation shall also be in full force.

From Chamber to Board of Revenue.

Calcutta, 14th October 1881.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 1012B., forwarding copy of a General Pass which has been prepared for use in the Ports of Bengal, under the Provisions of Section 164 of Act VIII. of 1878. Upon this the Board of Revenue invite an expression of opinion from the Chamber of Commerce.

It appears to be proposed to confine the benefits of the Pass to steamers owned in Calcutta, or whose owner shall have agents in Calcutta, willing to enter into a bond, and to deposit a sum of Rs. 10,000 as security for the fulfilment of the conditions of such bond.

The Committee of this Chamber are informed that the chief Customs authority at Madras and at Bombay, respectively, has for some time past issued General Passes to coasting vessels without either requiring bond or deposit. It is not alleged that any loss to the revenue or that any irregularities have followed; and although it is suggested that the harbour arrangements at Madras and Bombay are such that vessels are more easily watched there than at Calcutta, my Committee cannot find that it has been shewn that in the ports of Bengal, looked at as a whole, precautions are

called for of a character so much more elaborate and severe than those which have been found to work remarkably well along the much more extended coast line of the two sister Presidencies.

If, however, it be decided that at Calcutta the Collector of Customs must obtain signature of a bond before granting a pass, my Committee would at least submit that the bond ought to be sufficient security in itself. In case of any infraction of the law, the persons under bond would be in Calcutta and easily reached, and as their steamers would, in the nature of things, be always somewhere on the coast of India, their property could readily be attached. No sufficient reason occurs to the Committee why, amongst all the forms of guarantee accepted at the Custom House, this bond alone should be held to be insufficient without a money deposit.

The Committee desire further to remark that the conditions of the pass and bond appear to be framed mainly with a regard to the requirements of one large Company, and that they are likely to prove deterrent to other less wealthy shipowners.

For instance, it would seem from the form of bond, that the deposit to be taken is, in all cases, Rs. 10,000. It is true that in the 15th paragraph of the Board's letter of the 6th August to the Government of Bengal, it is said that this particular amount is proposed in the case of the steamers of the "British India Company", but silence is observed as regards others vessels; and as the Rs. 10,000 is printed and incorporated into the body of the bond, it is improbable that any officer of Customs will take the responsibility of accepting a smaller deposit.

To a large Company it is nothing to put down Rs. 10,000; but to the owner of, perhaps, one steamer, the amount may be of more consideration; and supposing that hereafter the Customs authorities at Madras and Bombay should follow the example now proposed to be set by Bengal, then any man who wished to run a steamer on the Indian coast would have to elect between locking up Rs. 30,000, or dispensing with privileges which may be vital to his enterprise.

The Committee would again express the hope that the Board may find it possible to dispense with a deposit; but if otherwise, then the Committee suggest that the deposit to be taken from any firm should be proportionate to the number of its steamers declared for coasting; and that this principle be expressly laid down for the guidance of the Customs authorities. The deposit should be in cash or in Government paper at the applicant's option.

There is another clause in the bond which appears objectionable. It is that numbered (7) *viz.*:—

"The said——shall deliver to the Collector of "Customs, Calcutta, within three hours of the announce-"ment by wire of every steamer's arrival at Saugor, "a written notice specifying all the ports from which such "steamer has arrived, and all the ports to which she is to "proceed on her next voyage."

A large concern, with mail contracts and fixed lines of traffic, may be able to do this without much difficulty, but another owner of coasters would find the condition more than onerous. It must often be impossible for him, immediately upon a steamer's arrival, to name the ports to which she will next voyage proceed, and, whether possi-

ble or not, it is obvious that to prematurely declare his plans must seriously prejudice his interest.

Looking generally to the importance of cheap and frequent interportal communications, and particularly to the very large factor which freight must always be in the cost of the food of the people, my Committee are confident that Government will recognise the impolicy of doing anything which might artificially restrict that healthy competition which in all private enterprises has, sooner or later, been found necessary to secure for the public moderation in charges, and to all concerned the benefit of efficiency and progress.

EXTENSION OF THE INDIAN PAPER CURRENCY ACT OF 1871 TO BRITISH BURMAH.

The opinion of the Chamber has been sought by Government upon a proposal to extend the Paper Currency system to British Burma. Your Committee could discover no objection such as could override the benefits certain to result from the projected measure.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.

No. 1278, *Calcutta the* 19*th May* 1881.

I am directed to forward herewith a copy of the papers noted on the margin * on the subject of the amendment of the Indian Paper Currency Act, 1871, and to request that the Lieutenant-Governor may be favored with

* Bill to amend the Indian Paper Currency Act 1871. Statement of Objects and Reasons of the Bill.

an expression of the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce on the provisions of the Bill.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS.

There is at present no Paper Currency which is a legal tender in Burma. Notes of the Calcutta circle are used to a limited extent in the chief towns, and occasionally notes of other circles are used, but there is no circle of issue in Burma.

2. Great inconvenience has been felt by the mercantile classes in Burma from this want; and in the year 1872 the question of establishing a circle of issue in that Province was before the Government of India. The Indian Paper Currency Act of 1871, however, renders it necessary to declare every town (other than Calcutta, Madras, or Bombay) in which there is an office of issue to be, for the purposes of the Act, situate within some Presidency. Had therefore a circle of issue been established in Burma, it would have been necessary to declare the place of issue to be situate within one of the Presidencies of Fort William, Fort St. George, and Bombay. The result would have been that, under section 9 of the Act, the notes of the Burma circle would have been payable at the office or offices of issue in Burma, and also at the Presidency Town of the Presidency (probably Fort William) within which the town of issue had been declared, for the purposes of the Act, to be situate.

3. The nature of the commercial transactions between Burma and India is such that, under those circumstances, it would have been unwise to establish a circle of issue

in Burma. At particular periods of the year large remittances of money are made between Calcutta and Rangoon, and if the Burmese notes were payable at Calcutta, the Government might be put to considerable inconvenience and expense in providing cash to meet the notes. The question was accordingly allowed to remain in abeyance.

4. The rapid increase of the trade of Burma has again caused the question to be brought before the Government of India. The best authorities are agreed that Burma can no longer do without a paper currency, but that the Burmese notes should be payable only at the office of issue and not at any Presidency-town. The public will thus enjoy most of the conveniences of a paper currency, while the Government will not be obliged to undertake the exchange business of British Burma.

5. The amendments in the Paper Currency Act proposed in the Bill have for their objects—

1*st*—to create a Commissioner of the Department of Issue at Rangoon ;

2*ndly*—to make the towns of issue in Burma independent of the Presidencies ;

3*rdly*—to render the paper issued at any town in Burma payable only at the office of issue.

6. The first of these objects is attained by a slight alteration of the fourth section of the Act ; the second by amending section 5, so as to empower the Governor-General in Council to declare a town to be situate for the purposes of the Act within a Province as well as a Presidency ; the third will be effected by the amendment just described, for the town of issue in Burma can then be declared

situate within the Province of British Burma, and Burmese notes will not then be payable at Calcutta or any other Presidency town.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 23rd June 1881.

Your letter No. 1278 of the 19th of last month, forwarding copy of a Bill to amend Act No. III of 1871, with the view to extend the paper currency system to British Burma, has had the attention of the Committee of this Chamber; and I am desired by them to express their entire concurrence in the object which the proposed measure is intended to attain.

From the inquiries which they have made, the Committee learn that the introduction of a local paper money into that Province would go far to mitigate the inconvenience and risk involved in the carriage of large sums of specie in the ordinary course of business; and the facilities which the paper currency system would thus afford in conducting commercial transactions would unquestionably be greatly appreciated by an annually increasing trade.

The Committee have not heard that any private interests are likely to suffer, and no objection occurs to them that can override the advantages that would be generally gained.

SULKEA SALT GOLAHS.

The Collector of Customs was good enough to consult the Committee upon a scheme for the better utilization of the jetty facing the Sulkea Golahs. After taking the opinions of those members more particularly interested in the salt trade, the Committee recommended that a series of pontoon landing stages be put down of a size sufficient to enable vessels to discharge over them without the intervention of boats. No doubt the Hooghly Bridge is an obstacle to vessels moving up to the Golahs, but the Committee think that if the scheme they have sketched were judiciously and liberally worked out, the saving of time to vessels and of expense to bonders of salt would altogether outweigh the cost of moving ship, and the couple of days' interruption of discharge which transporting might occasion.

From Collector of Customs to Chamber.

No. 3940. *Dated, the* 27*th August* 1881.

The question of repairing the jetty facing the Sulkea Salt Golahs is under consideration. At present the jetty serves as a landing stage for the Superintendent on his daily visits, and for myself on my occasional visits to the Golahs. This being the only use to which the jetty is put, I naturally hesitate to recommend the expenditure

of the large sum, 6,600 Rs., which the repairs are estimated to cost; while at the same time I am reluctant to advise the demolition of the jetty, seeing that it is probably capable of being put to a remunerative use. Has the Chamber of Commerce ever considered the practicability of taking salt ships through the bridge up to the golahs, and landing the salt direct on to the jetty from the ship, thereby saving the expense of loading and unloading into cargo boats? There are some objections to this plan, which the Chamber will know better than myself. I shall be glad to discuss the question with the Chamber and to consider the advantages and disadvantages which may seem to them to attach to the proposal.

I have also another plan under consideration, by which the jetty could be utilized for the landing of salt from boats. By placing pontoons round the jetty and connecting them with the jetty head by means of steps, the work would be much expedited, as the salt lighters could be brought up alongside. The present plan of taking the salt out of cargo boats up the ghât steps is very tedious; and much time is wasted from the fact that the boats cannot come close up to the ghât. The coolies have to walk very slowly and cautiously along a plank from the boat to the landing ghât, and a false step may cause them to upset the salt bags into the water. The reduction in the cost of coolie labor to the bonder would enable him to pay a small jetty charge, which would in time clear off the cost of construction and maintenance of the pontoons. I shall be much obliged if the Chamber will favor me with their opinion on this proposal.

From Chamber to Collector of Customs.

Calcutta, 21st September 1881.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 3940 of the 27th of last month, in which you have been good enough to invite an expression of opinion upon your proposals for facilitating the landing of bonded salt at the Golahs at Sulkea.

Your communication has been referred to several members of the Chamber specially interested in the salt trade, and having considered their views and had the advantage of an interview with yourself, the Committee have arrived at the following conclusions:—

The cost of repairing the jetty facing the Golahs estimated at Rs. 6,600 is considerable, and the Committee appreciate the spirit in which you hesitate to incur so large an outlay merely for the accommodation of yourself occasionally and of the Superintendent of the Golahs in his daily visits. You have, however, suggested that the jetty might serve a valuable purpose if it were made part of a system of pontoons, gangways, &c., for the landing of salt both from lighters and direct from ships, whereby the inconveniences, risks, and waste of time which attend the present imperfect system might be materially lessened, if not wholly removed.

The Committee have given their thoughtful attention to your proposals, and they are of opinion that their adoption would be attended with marked advantage to that portion of the salt traffic which requires the accommodation afforded by the Government Golahs, provided

the several points dwelt upon in discussing the subject with you are kept prominently in view. These are—

1*st.*—That the series of pontoons should be of size and strength capable of accommodating the largest class of vessels, whilst at the same time they should be adapted for receiving salt from lighters.

2*nd.*—That the utmost possible facilities should be afforded to ships using the pontoons for rapid despatch, untrammelled by routine obstructions beyond such as are absolutely necessary to protect the revenue: and

3*rd.*—That charges for pontoon accommodation should be on the lowest possible scale.

If these conditions, *viz.*, suitable landing arrangements, expeditious discharge, and a low scale of charge, can be secured, the Committee believe that the objections which, in some of the replies to your letter, are taken on the ground of inconvenience and expense which vessels would incur in passing the floating bridge, would lose much of their force; and that results might follow from the adoption of your proposals such as would be sensibly appreciated by the shipping interests.

REDUCTION OF JETTY CHARGES.

It is a satisfactory feature of the half-year that a sum of about Rs. 40,000 has been appropriated by the Port Commissioners in reduction of jetty charges on various imports. But while this is fully recognised by the Committee they

consider that a further surplus of Rs. 60,000 which was available should have been devoted to the same purpose, and they trust that further material relief may be afforded during the ensuing year.

From Port Commissioners to Chamber.

No. 987, *The* 23*rd June* 1881.

The Budget Estimates of the Commissioners for the current year provide for a reduction in jetty charges to the extent of Rupees 40,000, and, with a view to revising the schedule, the Commissioners will be glad to receive from the Chamber an expression of the Committee's opinion as to the particular items in jetty charges to a reduction in which the sum set aside should be applied

I send a dozen copies of the Commissioners' Annual Report for 1880-81, and at page 4 will be found a statement shewing amount contributed by different classes of goods as landing charges.

From Chamber to the Commissioners.

Calcutta, 2nd August 1881.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to acknowledge receipt of your favor No. 987 of the 23rd June, requesting suggestions for the disposal of the amount (Rs. 40,000) by which the Port Commissioners propose to reduce jetty charges during the current year.

The recommendations which the Committee now offer for your consideration have been framed after taking the opinions of the members of the Chamber. It should be stated that considerable dissatisfaction has been expressed at the inadequacy of the proposed relief, and it is hoped that it may be increased by devoting to the reduction of shipping and landing charges some considerable portion of the further surplus available under the head of "jetties," which, in his letter of the 1st April to the Port Commissioners, the Secretary to the Government of Bengal states at Rs. 60,000.

Nevertheless, in their present proposals, the Committee have endeavoured to confine themselves within the prescribed limits, and they trust these have not been overstepped further than the continuous expansion of trade may speedily justify.

The difficulty which at the outset the Committee encounter is the fact that a very large proportion of the landing charges is derived from one source, *viz.*, cotton piece-goods, and that consequently any appreciable reduction in the jetty rate thereon will absorb an undesirably large percentage of the amount which has to be dealt with. Nevertheless, the opinion is general, and is shared by the Committee, that the rate for landing bales and cases of piece-goods not exceeding 20 cubic feet should be reduced from five to four annas per package.

There are many advocates for a similar reduction in the charge on cotton twist, but having regard to the fact that bales of twist are on the average about 40 per cent. larger than those of piece-goods, the Committee do not press this.

The other articles of import which the Committee believe to be most deserving of present relief, are :—

Paint, in kegs—proposed charge	2 As.	in place of	4 As.	per cwt.
" " casks " "	1-6 "	"	3 "	"
Varnish ... " "	1-6 "	"	4 "	"
French Polish and similar preparations.	4 pies	"	1 an.	per gallon.

Tea Sieves, measurement rates in place of one rupee per dozen.

Goods landed under the measurement rates schedule, which the Committee propose should be altered, *viz.,* as follows :—

		Rates. Present.	Proposed.
Under 3 cubic feet ...	...	Rs. 0 2 0	Rs. 0 2 0
Over 3 " and under 5 c. f.	...	" 0 4 0	
" 5 " " " 10 "	...	" 0 5 0	" 0 4 0
" 10 " " " 15 "	...	" 0 7 0	" 0 6 0
" 15 " " " 20 "	...	" 0 8 0	
" 20 " " " 30 "	...	" 1 0 0	" 0 12 0
" 30 " " " 40 "	...	" 1 8 0	" 1 4 0
" 40 " " " 50 "	...	" 2 0 0	" 2 0 0
" 50 " " " 60 "	...	" 3 0 0	" 3 0 0
" 60 " " " ——	...	" 5 0 0	Rs. 3 and one anna for each c. f. in excess of 60 c. f.

If the Commissioners should decide to appropriate a further amount in reduction of landing charges, the Committee would suggest the following articles as having the next claim :—*Iron, Machinery, Nails, Steel, Quicksilver, Canvas, Marble, and Sulphate of Copper.*

The Committee also desire to point out the inequality of the present charges for landing machinery, as exemplified by the fact that a machine weighing 10½ tons is charged Rs. 105, while one of 9½ tons is charged only

Rs. 47-8, and they would suggest a re-arrangement of the schedule somewhat on the following lines :—

Say, 1 anna 6 pie per cwt. up to 2 tons.
2 annas per cwt. on any excess over 2 tons up to 4 tons.
4 " " " " 4 " " 10 "
8 " " " " 10 "

The Committee do not commit themselves to these rates : their object is merely to suggest the direction in which reform appears necessary.

In connection with this subject, the Committee request attention to the following extract from a letter which they have received :—

"*Rule* 2—*removal charge on heavy lifts* is of some-"what recent introduction, and bears heavily upon im-"porters, for it is simply an impossibility to get your "truck down on to the Jetty-head to take delivery there. "The rule consequently practically adds 50 per cent. to "the landing charges of all packages exceeding four tons "in weight : we have never known of an importer being "able to take delivery of a four-ton package at the Jetty-"head, and do not think the Port Commissioners can "adduce a single instance."

If it be impossible to arrange for importers' trucks to get to the Jetty-heads the Committee think some relaxation of this rule is desirable.

There appears to be some misunderstanding as to *Rule* 7, regarding which the following has been received by the Committee, who would be glad to have the intent of the rule authoritatively fixed :—

"*Use of cranes in loading carts.*—This rule seems to "be very imperfectly understood both by importers and

"Jetty officers. We have never yet been able to find out "whether the charge of one-third of landing charges is for "use of crane only, or for use of crane with men to "work it and a gunner to superintend. Sometimes the "Jetty people say it does include coolies and a gunner, "at other times they say it does not; we have sometimes "had a gunner and two gangs of jetty coolies, but much "more frequently we have had to man the crane with "our own coolies. If the charge is simply for the use "of the crane, there can be no question as to the rate "being much too high."

The Committee view with regret the very small revenue derived from jetty charges on export cargo, such as seeds, grain, jute, &c.; and they regard this as indicating that a considerable reduction in the present rates is needed to attract more business.

In conclusion, the Committee have to report that several importing houses have urged an extension of the time allowed for taking delivery, and a reduction in the rates charged for wharf rent on goods not cleared within the specified time.

The Committee recognise the hardship of which these firms complain, and since it arises chiefly from Custom House regulations, over which importers have no control, the Committee would be glad if the Commissioners would join them in an endeavour to get some desirable modifications introduced so as to admit of more expeditious delivery.

Report of the Committee appointed by Resolution 6 of the 339th Meeting to consider the letter from the Secretary, Bengal Chamber of Commerce, and to revise the Schedule of Jetty Charges, with a view to give effect to the reduction in charges to the extent of Rs. 40,000, set aside in the current year's Budget Estimates.

The Committee met on Monday the 15th day of August 1881.

PRESENT:

THE HON'BLE H. J. REYNOLDS, C. S., *Chairman.*

A. B. INGLIS, ESQ.	G. IRVING, ESQ.
R. STEEL, ESQ.	D. SCOTT, ESQ., C. E.

WE have read carefully the letter from the Secretary to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, in reply to letter from the Comissioners, No. 987, dated 23rd June 1881, asking for any suggestions that body might have to make in regard to the proposed reduction of Jetty charges, and, after careful consideration of the recommendation therein made, beg to report as follows:—

It appears from the letter from the Chamber of Commerce that the items in the Schedule most urgently calling for reduction are those noted below, and the reduction we recommended is shown opposite each item.

Number of item in Schedule	Names of Articles.	Present rate.			Proposed rate.		
		Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
223	Piece-goods, per bale or case not exceeding ... ... 20 c. ft.	0	5	0	0	4	6
161	Iron in plates, bars, rods, hoops, pig, angle, nail, rails, sleepers, &c. per ton	1	4	0	1	0	0
164	Do girders, columns, railings, bridge-works, tanks, posts, &c. ... „ „	1	14	0	1	4	0
165	Do ditto ditto over two tons ... „ „	2	8	0	Charges by weight.		
162	Do. castings or hollow-ware ... ... „ cwt.	0	2	0	0	1	0
200	Nails in kegs ... ... „ „	0	2	6	0	2	0
278	Steel ... ... „ „	0	2	0	0	1	6
236	Quicksilver ... ... „ „	0	4	0	0	4	0
49	Canvas in bales ... ... „ bale	0	8	0	0	6	0
	Goods by measurement.						
324	Under 3 cubic feet...	0	2	0	0	2	0
325	Over 3 ditto and under 5 cubic feet	0	4	0	0	3	0
326	Do. 5 ditto ditto 10 ditto...	0	5	0	0	4	0
327	Do. 10 ditto ditto 15 ditto...	0	7	0	0	6	0
328	Do. 15 ditto ditto 20 ditto...	0	8	0	0	7	0
329	Do. 20 ditto ditto 30 ditto...	1	0	0	0	12	0
330	Do. 30 ditto ditto 40 ditto...	1	8	0	1	4	0
331	Do. 40 ditto ditto 50 ditto...	2	0	0	2	0	0
332	Do. 50 ditto ditto 60 ditto...	3	0	0	3	0	0
333	Do. 60 ditto ditto...	5	0	0	4	0	0
216	Paints in kegs of 28 to 56 lbs. ... ... per cwt.	0	4	0	0	3	0
217	Do. in casks ... ... „ „	0	3	0	0	2	0

From the actual receipts during the past year we have prepared the following statement, showing the reduction n Jetty receipts which will be caused by this alteration in the rates.

Number of item in Schedule.	Names of Articles.	Average measurement.	Amount realized at present rates during 1880-81.	Amount which would be realized at proposed rates.	Loss of revenue.
			Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
22 & 22½	Piece-goods	10 to 15 c. ft.	1,38,871	1,24,984	13,887
23	Beads	15 to 20 ,,	691	592	99
145	Hardware	10 to 15 ,,	7, 011	6,135	876
160	Instruments	20 ,,	500	428	72
190	Matches	5 ,,	3,165	2,769	396
101	Drugs	5 ,,	467	350	117
192	Medicines	20 to 30 ,,	1,057	793	264
1 3	Millinery and Haberdashery	5 to 10 ,,	4 323	3,242	1,081
212	Oilman's stores	5 to 10 ,,	6,086	4,869	1,217
255	Slates	3 ,,	631	425	106
270	Soap	10 to 15 ,,	1,863	....	....
275	Stamps or Stamp paper	10 to 15 ,,	777	666	111
276	Stationery	3 to 5 ,,	9,456	8,105	1,351
296	Tobacco	10 to 15 ,,	591	443	148
307	Umbrellas	20 to 30 ,,	2,159	1,851	308
322	Woolen piece-goods	....	6,816	5,112	1,704
....	Miscellaneous goods	....	4,666	4,124	542
....	Mixed goods at measurement rates	.....	12,542	11,084	1,458
161	Iron in plates, bars, rods, hooks, pig, angle, nail, rails, sleeper, &c.	.....	43,787	35,050	8,737
164 & 165	Ditto, girders, columns, railings, bridge-work, tanks, posts, &c.	....	1,434	1,194	240
162	Ditto castings or hollow-ware	.....	9,921	4,961	4,960
240	Nails	.....	2,064	1,651	413
278	Steel	.....	5,144	3,858	1,286
236	Quicksilver	.....	.....	.....	.....
49	Canvas	.....	730	548	182
216	Paint in kegs	.....	6,475	4,107	1,368
217	Do. in casks	.....	1,706	1,138	568
			2,71,833	2,28,459	41,511

We recommend the adoption of the above revised schedule rates, which we estimate to involve a loss of revenue of about Rs. 41,511.

We take this opportunity, at the suggestion of the Superintendent of the Jetties, of advising the reduction of the following rates, with the view of attracting business to the Jetties, the Superintendent being of opinion that at lower rates these goods will pass through the Jetties to a greater extent than at present :—

Item in Schedule.	Names of Articles.	Present rate.	Proposed rate.
		R. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
74	Coal ... ... per cwt.	0 0 9	0 0 6
20	Ballast ... ... ,, ,,	0 0 6	0 0 4
58	Castor seeds ... per bag of 2 Bazar Mds.	0 1 0	0 0 6
61	Chalk ... ... per cwt.	0 0 9	0 0 6
87	Cotton ... ... ,, bale.	0 3 0	0 2 0
279 } 280 }	Stones ... ... ,, cwt.	0 2 0	0 1 6
281	Do. engraved ... ... ,, ,,	0 2 6	0 2 0
278½	Stonesets ... ... ,, ,,	....	0 0 6
279½	Stones over two tons	.....	By weight.
288	Tea in chests ... ... each	0 3 0	0 2 0
289	Do. in half or quarter chests ,,	0 1 6	0 1 3
294	Tin blocks ... ... per cwt.	0 1 6	0 1 3
315	Whiting ... ... ,, ,,	0 1 0	0 0 9

We have considered the complaint in the Chamber of Commerce's letter regarding the charges made for lifting heavy weights. The lifts referred to are nearly all made by the 30-ton floating crane, which the Commissioners are bound by law to provide (Act V of 1870, section 60).

This crane cost 1½ lakhs of rupees, and, although one of the most useful and efficient appliances belonging to the Commissioners, has not yet done much more than pay its own working expenses. Last year the crane earnings amounted to Rs. 19,452, and the working expenses to Rs. 12,090.

Mr. Steel informed the Committee that were it not for the facility afforded by this crane in lifting heavy weights in Calcutta, ships would either refuse to bring out the heavy pieces of machinery, &c., now carried, or if they agreed to bring them, then only at much enhanced rates of freight.

With these facts before us, we are not prepared to recommend any reduction in the charges for lifting and landing heavy machinery.

With regard to the removal charge on heavy weights, the Vice-Chairman explained to the Committee that, with a view to relieve the burden of this charge as much as possible, arrangements are now in hand for delivering heavy weights (landed into boats, or on to the crane deck,) on the Jetty at Armenian Ghât, either on to railway, or importer's trucks.

The Chamber of Commerce enquire whether the use of the cranes in the Jetty-yard, for which a charge of one-third of the landing charges is made, includes the use of the crane men and gunner. The Chamber may be informed that the charge includes the use of the establishment required to work the crane.

H. J. REYNOLDS,
Chairman.

A. B. INGLIS.
R. STEEL.
G. IRVING.
D. SCOTT.

NOTIFICATION.

THE following revision of the Schedule of charges on goods landed at the Jetties, having been sanctioned by His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, is published for general information under the provisions of Section 65, Act V. (B. C.) of 1870.

These charges will come into force from the 1st October 1881.

Number of item in Schedule.	Names of Articles.	Present rate of landing charge.	Revised rate of landing charge.
		Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
20	Ballast ... ... per cwt.	0 0 6	0 0 4
49	Canvas in bales ... ... per bale.	0 8 0	0 6 0
58	Castor seeds ... ... per bag of 2 bazar maunds.	0 1 0	0 0 6
61	Chalk ... ... per cwt.	0 0 9	0 0 6
74	Coal or Coke ... ... per cwt.	0 0 9	0 0 6
87	Cotton ... ... per bale.	0 3 0	0 2 0
161	Iron in plates, bars, rods, hoops, pig, angle, nail, rails, sleepers, &c. ... ... per ton.	1 4 0	1 0 0
162	Do. castings or hollow-ware ... ... per cwt.	0 2 0	0 1 0
164	Do. girders, columns, railings, bridge-works, tanks, posts, &c. ... ... per ton.	1 14 0	1 4 0
165	Ditto ditto over 2 tons ... ... per ton.	2 8 0	Charges by weight.
200	Nails in kegs ... ... per cwt.	0 2 6	0 2 0
216	Paints in kegs of 28 to 56lbs. ... ... per cwt.	0 4 0	0 3 0
217	Do. in casks ... ... per cwt.	0 3 0	0 2 0
223	Piece-goods in bale or case not exceeding 20 cubic feet ... per bale.	0 5 0	0 4 6
278	Steel ... ... per cwt.	0 2 0	0 1 6
278¼	Stone sets ... ... per cwt.	Nil.	0 0 6
279 } 280 }	Stones ... ... per cwt.	0 2 0	0 1 6

Number of item in Schedule.	Names of Articles.	Present rate of landing charge.	Revised rate of landing charge.
		Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
280¼	Stones over 2 tons ... ... per cwt.	Nil	Charges by weight.
281	Do. engraved ... ... per cwt.	0 2 6	0 2 0
288	Tea in chests ... ... each.	0 3 0	0 2 0
289	Do. in half or quarter chests ... ... each.	0 1 6	0 1 3
294	Tin blocks ... ... per cwt.	0 1 6	0 1 3
315	Whiting ... ... per cwt.	0 1 0	0 0 9
	Goods by measurement.		
324	Under 3 cubic feet	0 2 0	0 2 0
325	Over 3 ditto and under 5 cubic feet	0 4 0	0 3 0
326	Do. 5 ditto 10 ditto	0 5 0	0 4 0
327	Do. 10 ditto 15 ditto	0 7 0	0 6 0
328	Do. 15 ditto 20 ditto	0 8 0	0 7 0
329	Do. 20 ditto 30 ditto	1 0 0	0 12 0
330	Do. 30 ditto 40 ditto	1 8 0	1 4 0
331	Do. 40 ditto 50 ditto	2 0 0	2 0 0
332	Do. 50 ditto 60 ditto	3 0 0	3 0 0
333	Do. 60 cubic feet	5 0 0	4 0 0

Calcutta, the 24th September 1881.

(1578—1)

By order of the Commissioners,
D. Scott, *Offg. Vice-Chairman.*

REVISED SCALE OF PILOTAGE FEES: REDUCTION OF PORT DUES.

The following Resolution explains the circumstances under which the Government of Bengal have found it possible to lower the rates of pilotage by 15 per cent. It is an additional matter for congratulation that the prosperous condition of the finances of the Port Commissioners has enabled them not only to recoup the Government for this concession but also to reduce the port dues to 3 annas per ton.

Darjeeling the 10th July 1881.

RESOLUTION:

Read again—

Letter No. 29, dated the 11th May 1881, submitting, for the sanction of the Government of India, a revised scale of pilotage fees for ships visiting the port of Calcutta.

Read—

Letter No. 1166, dated the 15th June 1881, from the Assistant Secretary to the Government of India, in the Department of Finance and Commerce, conveying the sanction of the Government of India to the scale recommended by the Lieutenant-Governor.

Upwards of ten years have elapsed since the then annually recurring deficits in the accounts of the Port of Calcutta brought prominently to the notice of Govern-

ment the necessity for taking measures to establish an equilibrium between receipts and expenditure. In the year 1870-71, which showed a considerable improvement over its predecessors, the excess of expenditure over income amounted to more than three lakhs of rupees; and although the net deficit had, in 1871-72, been reduced to Rs. 1,02,000, it was still clear that increased revenue or decreased expenditure could alone enable the Port to pay its way. The high rate of the existing dues rendered the adoption of the former alternative inexpedient. It was proposed, therefore, to reduce the pilotage fees by 15 per cent., and to increase the port dues by corresponding amount. That this reduction might not press hardly on the pilots, the majority of whom being remunerated by a percentage on their earnings would have suffered to the extent of about 7½ per cent., it was determined to so far lessen their number that those remaining in the service should not be injuriously affected. This scheme received the sanction of the Government of India, and the reduction in the number of pilots was effected at a cost for retiring allowances of over two lakhs of rupees.

2. Pending this change, no action was taken with regard to the fees till the 24th January 1877, when a Resolution was recorded, from which the following is an extract :—

"The Lieutenant-Governor is therefore of opinion that the time has come for reducing the pilotage dues by 15 per cent., and making a corresponding increase in the amount of port dues so as to secure an equilibrium between the receipts and expenditure of the Port of Calcutta. A reduction of 15 per cent. in the gross pi-

lotage dues will enable the Government to raise the port dues from 4 to 6 annas per ton, without imposing any additional burden upon the shipping, and, with the approval of the Government of India, which is required before any change can be made in the port dues at present levied, this revision of existing arrangements will be carried out at once."

A technical difficulty connected with the wording of Act XII. of 1875 (the Indian Ports Act), prevented the scheme from being worked in the exact manner proposed, but the object in view was gained by continuing to levy the pilotage fees at the former rate, and by transferring 15 per cent. of the proceeds to the Port Fund before dividing the remainder between Government and the pilots. In June 1880 the Committee appointed to consider the proposals for the amalgamation of the duties of the Port Officer with those of the Port Commissioners reported that both port dues and pilotage funds had in this way been brought into a solvent condition, and they recommended that the Government of India should, for mainly administrative reasons, be moved to amend Act XII. of 1875, and to increase the maximum rate of port dues from 4 to 6 annas per ton. The pilotage charges should, it was considered, then be formally reduced, a new scale being framed lower than the present by 15 per cent. A similar recommendation had been made by the Committee which sat last year to investigate the accounts of Marine expenditure, and the Port Officer was accordingly instructed to draw up a revised scale of pilotage fees in the manner suggested.

3. The Government of India has approved of this scale, which is shown in the schedule to this Resolution

and will come into effect on the 1st August. In framing the scale, fractions of a rupee have, for convenience sake, been omitted from calculation.

4. The prosperous condition of the Port Commissioners' revenues has enabled them to set aside Rs. 1,20,000 per annum as a contribution towards Port Funds, which will obviate the necessity of raising the port dues from 4 annas to 6 annas per ton as originally contemplated. The whole of the saving of 15 per cent. in pilotage will thus go to benefit the trade of the Port. The Lieutenant-Governor is glad to learn from a further communication just received from the Port Commissioners that they will be able also to make good to Port Funds the equivalent of another anna per ton from the 1st October next. The port dues will from that date therefore be reduced to 3 annas per ton.

By order of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal,

A. MACKENZIE,
Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

No. 51.

Copy forwarded to the Secretary to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, for information.

By order of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal,

C. S. BAYLEY,
Offg. Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

CALCUTTA,
The 11th July 1881.

SCHEDULE.

Revised Scale of Pilotage Fees payable on Ships visiting the Port of Calcutta.

Steamers or Sailing Vessels taking steam from any part of the distance are entitled to a reduction of one-fourth from the charges for such portion of the distance.

Draught.	Full pilotage: Inward.	Intermediate or broken pilotage.										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
		12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
Not exceeding 8 feet	54	5	9	14	18	23	27	31	36	40	45	49
8 feet, and not exceeding 9 feet	85	8	15	22	29	36	43	50	57	64	71	78
9 ditto ditto 10 „	117	10	20	30	39	49	59	69	78	88	98	108
10 ditto ditto 11 „	139	12	24	35	47	58	70	81	93	104	116	127
11 ditto ditto 12 „	160	14	27	40	54	67	80	93	107	120	133	147
12 ditto ditto 13 „	181	16	31	46	61	76	91	106	121	136	151	166
13 ditto ditto 14 „	213	18	36	54	71	89	107	124	142	160	178	195
14 ditto ditto 15 „	245	21	41	62	82	102	123	143	163	184	204	225
15 ditto ditto 16 „	287	24	48	72	96	120	144	168	192	216	240	263
16 ditto ditto 17 „	340	29	57	85	114	142	170	199	227	255	284	312
17 ditto ditto 18 „	394	33	66	99	132	164	197	230	263	295	328	361
18 ditto ditto 19 „	447	38	75	112	149	186	224	261	298	335	372	410
19 ditto ditto 20 „	510	43	85	128	170	213	255	298	340	383	425	468
20 ditto ditto 21 „	574	48	96	144	192	240	287	335	383	431	479	526
21 ditto ditto 22 „	627	53	105	157	209	262	314	366	418	471	523	575
22 ditto ditto 23 „	680	57	114	171	227	284	341	397	454	511	567	624
23 ditto ditto 24 „	744	62	124	186	248	310	372	434	496	558	620	682
24 ditto ditto 25 „	850	71	142	213	284	355	425	496	567	638	709	780
25 ditto ditto 26 „	1,001	84	167	251	334	418	501	589	668	751	835	918
26 ditto ditto 27 „	1,175	98	196	294	392	490	588	686	784	882	980	1,078

Draught.	Full pilotage: Outward.	Intermediate or broken pilotgae.										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
		12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
Not exceeding 8 feet	54	5	9	14	18	23	27	31	36	40	45	49
8 feet, and not exceeding 9 fee	85	8	15	22	29	36	43	50	57	64	71	78
9 ditto ditto 10 „	128	11	22	32	43	54	64	75	85	96	107	117
10 ditto ditto 11 „	149	13	25	37	50	62	74	87	99	111	124	136
11 ditto ditto 12 „	170	15	29	43	57	71	85	100	114	128	142	154
12 ditto ditto 13 „	192	16	32	48	64	80	96	112	128	144	160	176
13 ditto ditto 14 „	224	19	38	56	75	93	112	131	149	168	186	205
14 ditto ditto 15 „	255	22	43	64	85	107	128	149	170	192	213	234
15 ditto ditto 16 „	309	26	52	78	103	129	155	180	206	232	257	283
16 ditto ditto 17 „	383	32	64	96	128	160	192	224	255	287	319	351
17 ditto ditto 18 „	447	38	75	112	149	186	224	261	298	335	372	410
18 ditto ditto 19 „	500	42	84	125	167	209	250	292	333	375	417	458
19 ditto ditto 20 „	574	48	96	144	192	240	287	335	383	431	479	526
20 ditto ditto 21 „	638	54	107	160	213	266	319	372	425	479	532	585
21 ditto ditto 22 „	691	58	116	173	231	288	346	403	461	518	576	634
22 ditto ditto 23 „	744	62	124	186	248	310	372	434	496	558	620	682
23 ditto ditto 24 „	819	69	137	205	273	341	410	478	546	614	682	750
24 ditto ditto 25 „	935	78	156	234	312	390	468	546	624	702	780	858
25 ditto ditto 26 „	1,102	92	184	276	368	459	551	642	733	825	917	1,009
26 ditto ditto 27 „	1,275	107	213	319	425	532	638	744	850	957	1,063	1,169

MAKING UP AND STAMPING LENGTHS ON MANCHESTER COTTON PIECE-GOODS.

This subject has been brought into prominent notice, not only in this but also in the Bombay presidency, and has led to the correspondence of which a copy is annexed. The Committee understand that the legality of selling goods on which nominal lengths are stamped will shortly come before a court of law. Meanwhile they learn with satisfaction that the practice of stamping goods with longer than the actual lengths has, to a considerable extent, been abandoned in this market.

From Chamber to Manchester Chamber.

31*st January* 1881.

I am desired by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to invite your attention to the various methods in vogue in Manchester of measuring cotton goods. As regards widths it is understood that the use of the standard yard, or "stick" of 36 inches, is universal, but for lengths, both the long "stick" of 37 or 36½ inches, and the short "stick" of 36 or 35½ inches are employed, Without questioning the original intent of such variations, the Committee are of opinion that they are liable to abuse, and consider it highly desirable that one universal standard, *viz.*, the 36 inches "stick" be recognised by the trade. The subject has recently been brought prominently forward by differences of opinion between sellers and buyers as to the length which 32-in. madapollams should

be. The goods are stamped as usual "24 yards," and the buyer claims that he is entitled to 24 yards of 36 inches in each piece. On the other hand, the sellers urge that 32-in. madapollams are invariably bought in Manchester by the double piece of 46 yards of the "long" or 36½ inches "stick;" that as the goods in question run out 23 yards 11 inches the single piece, they are of the dimensions which long usage sanctions, and that the buyers must have been aware, when purchasing, that the brand "24 yards" is used merely to denote that the goods are of the usual length. While there is no doubt that the customary lengths of grey goods so stamped are well known to the trade generally, it is open to unscrupulous buyers to maintain their individual ignorance, and there is little doubt that the law would uphold their claim for compensation if goods were found to fall short of nominal lengths. The law here will recognise no yard but the standard one of 36 inches, and will see in the various "sticks" used in Manchester only so many contrivances for glossing over deception. The Committee would add that the best legal talent here is taxed to the utmost to devise a form of contract which shall free importers from undue responsibility for trivial and inevitable irregularities in manufacture, and since the law is administered so stringently, where there is no possibility of imputing blame, they ask how it is likely to be construed where goods are apparently deficient? Buyers here have lately displayed remarkable aptitude in availing of legal quibbles, and the Committee believe that the adoption of the universal standard they recommend will be one means, and an important one, of preventing misunderstandings and of protecting shippers' interests. They further consider that shippers will consult their own

Interests by ceasing to stamp their goods in the manner allowed by custom, which permits more yards to be stamped on the piece than it actually contains.

From Manchester Chamber to Chamber.

March 1st, 1881.

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 31st January last, bringing under the attention of this Chamber the various methods of measurement adopted in Manchester as applying to cotton-goods, and recommending the adoption of a uniform standard, *viz.*, the "stick" of 36 inches, to prevent the evasions which, as it is alleged, are practiced in the delivery of goods in India.

I am directed to assure your Chamber that the subject is occupying the attention of the Chamber in Manchester, and I shall not fail to forward to you at the earliest moment a report of the course pursued by the Directors on the statement you have been good enough to submit for their consideration.

From Manchester Chamber.

May 24th, 1881.

On the 1st March last, I had the honor of acknowledging receipt of your letter, dated 31st January 1881, regarding short lengths in Manchester goods, and the subject has since engaged the attention of a Special Committee of this Chamber.

On full inquiry it has been ascertained that many descriptions of goods, as Madapollams, Jacconets, Mulls, Dhooties, and even Shirtings, have been made for sometime

past of shorter lengths than were formerly customary and of course when the actual lengths have been stamped on the pieces no deception has taken place.

In some cases, however, it is feared that a practice has been resorted to of so folding and so stamping goods as to mislead the ultimate buyers up-country, and although this has in most cases been done, as is alleged, under instructions from the dealers in Calcutta, Bombay, and other ports, it is unnecessary to say that my Directors most emphatically denounce all such irregular practices.

With regard to the length of a yard it is by English law, as you state, 36 inches, and no custom of trade can alter this: your buyers therefore have a remedy in their own hands if they find goods shorter than the lengths stamped on them, and in the interests of legitimate trade they should be encouraged to apply it by your and other Indian Chambers of Commerce.

From Chamber to Manchester Chamber.

Calcutta, 28th June 1881.

I am instructed by the Committee to acknowledge receipt of your letter, dated the 24th May, from which they are glad to learn that the question of stamping lengths on Manchester goods has received the consideration of a Special Committee of your Chamber.

My Committee will certainly do all in their power to discourage and prevent any such practices as those which your Directors very properly condemn; and they trust it may soon become the universal custom in Manchester to sell goods by the legal yard only, and to stamp them

according to their actual lengths so nearly as these can in practice be ascertained.

To the Committee it appears that the adoption throughout the trade of one uniform yard "*stick*" of 36-inches would prevent any misunderstanding as to the standard lengths of cotton-goods, and do more than anything else to bring about a solution of the difficulty. In their letter, which you acknowledge, they referred especially to this, and they trust it may yet receive the attention it merits, and which, judging by the absence of any reference to it by you, there is reason to fear it has not received.

Such length-marks as 38½ yards and 39 yards on Shirtings, and 24 yards on Madapollams, when they do not measure so much, are well understood by all native purchasers, from first to last, to mean only the usual full lengths of such goods and not their exact measurement; but, although no one may suffer, the practice of stamping goods with greater than their actual lengths is not to be defended and ought in the opinion of this Chamber to be given up, even if a custom of old standing.

The Committee, however, make a very wide distinction between such trade usages so universally adopted and any existing practices which may have been introduced with a view to deception. The latter are, of course, condemned by this Chamber, but at the same time the Committee must point out that as goods are manufactured, made up, stamped, and packed in Manchester, it is there that the evil can best be remedied.

From Manchester Chamber.

Manchester, October 5th, 1881.

Your letter of the 23th June last, regarding short lengths in cotton-goods has had the attention of the Committee appointed by this Chamber to consider the subject, and I am instructed to reply. The Committee of your Chamber recommends the adoption of one uniform yard "stick" of 36-in., and you remark that this suggestion, which had been made in your previous communication of 31st January, does not appear to have had the attention that it merits, whereas in my letter of 24th May you will find it stated, that "a yard is by English law 36-in., and no custom of trade can alter this." Whilst, however, no yard short of 36-in. is recognised, it has been customary, in certain trades, for manufacturers to give, under the term "long stick," 36½-in. or 37-in. to the yard, the practice having, it is believed, been adopted with the intention of covering the loss of the retailer in cutting off and selling portions of a piece. You will at once see that this Chamber cannot attempt to interfere with such an arrangement between seller and buyer. Your letter appears to have been written under the misapprehension that the irregularities complained of have their origin in ambiguity as to what number of inches constitute a recognised yard in this market, but no such ambiguity exists. The irregular practices emphatically condemned alike by the Chambers of Commerce in India and Manchester, appear to have mainly originated in the compliance of shippers with instructions and suggestions received from India. This view of the case is borne out in remarks on the subject contained in the Bombay Exchange Price Current of 12th July last, closing:—"It

is not surprising that a native dealer should order such goods, but it is certainly not creditable to the Bombay commercial reputation that such orders should be executed by European houses." I enclose copy of a letter on this subject recently received from the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, and of the reply which I have been directed to make, and I am to add that even such trade usages as those to which your Committee refers, do not, in the opinion of the Directors of this Chamber, in any degree, warrant the stamping of any description of goods other than their actual length; and they agree with your Committee that such practices should immediately be discontinued. It will be seen, however, that the Manchester Chamber is as powerless as is that of Bengal, in a legal sense, and my Directors have come to the conclusion that the only way in which they can assist in the very desirable effort to put an end to the irregular practices under consideration is to give publicity to them. With this object they have instructed me to publish the whole of the correspondence, and they hope your Committee may agree with them in thinking that a similar course might with advantage be adopted both at the ports and in the interior of India, in the native as well as in the English press.

From Bombay to Manchester Chamber.

Bombay, 9th August 1881.

I am desired by the Committee of this Chamber to address you on the subject of the practices, which are becoming more common, of incorrectly stamping the lengths of grey cloths, and in cases where cloths are

manufactured considerably shorter than usual of omitting the stamp altogether. The cloths, you are doubtless aware, are chiefly shirtings, jacconets, and buff-end madapollams. It is not to meet any special requirement of the consumers that the cloths are warped shorter than the old lengths ; the object is, without doubt, to deceive the buyer here into supposing that he is getting the old length. The manufacturer, moreover, can gain nothing by the practice, as the shipper will only pay a price proportionate with the length; on the contrary, by selling a full length cloth to one shipper, and a short length to another, he will ultimately injure himself, for the short lengths will supplant, for the time being, the correct lengths, and the outlet for the latter will be filled by other makes. The Committee, therefore, will be glad if your Chamber will kindly urge manufacturers not to cut down their regular lengths to meet occasional orders, the object of which can only be to deceive. The Committee understand that there has been a correspondence on this subject between the Manchester and the Bengal Chambers of Commerce. They will be glad to be informed if the latter Chamber has been able to suggest a remedy, and they desire me to invite your co-operation in an endeavour being made to put down these objectionable practices.

From Manchester to Bombay Chamber.

Manchester, October 5th, 1881.

I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 9th August regarding the lengths and stamping of grey cloth, and the views of your Chamber therein expressed have been duly placed before the Committee specially appointed to consider this subject. As requested in the

concluding paragraph of your letter, I now hand you the enclosed copies of the correspondence that has passed between this Chamber and that of Bengal, and to express the hope that your Committee also may think it advisable that the correspondence should appear in both the English and native newspapers throughout your Presidency.

From Manchester to Madras Chamber.

Manchester, October 5th, 1881.

I am instructed by my Directors to forward to you the enclosed copies of correspondence between this Chamber and those of Calcutta and Bombay regarding the making-up and stamping of cotton-goods for India, and to express the hope that your Chamber also may think it desirable to secure the publication of this correspondence in both the English and native newspapers throughout your Presidency.

OPENING BALES OF COTTON PIECE-GOODS AT THE CUSTOM HOUSE.

It is the practice at the Custom House to open for examination one bale in each shipment of grey goods, declared as duty-free, in order to test the accuracy of the description. For each bale so opened importers are obliged to make the native purchaser an allowance of about Rs. 5, which becomes a very serious tax on the trade. The Committee, having carefully considered the

practicability of their suggestion, proposed that instead of the bales being entirely unpacked the cloth might, in the first instance, be sufficiently tested by the removal of only one, or at most two, of the iron bands; thus obviating, in cases where there could be no suspicion of error, the necessity of any allowance for opened bales. The representation of the Committee appears to have commended itself to the Government of India, although no action has been taken in the matter, perhaps in view of the early removal of all duties from greygoods.

From Chamber to the Government of India.

Calcutta, 30*th August* 1881.

I am desired by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to address you on the subject of the great loss which importers of duty-free grey piece-goods at present sustain in consequence of the practice at the Custom House of testing the accuracy of the description by opening out one bale in every shipment of cloth declared not to contain yarns finer than 30s, and therefore to be free of duty.

Dealers sending their goods to the up-country districts have to re-pack these opened bales as well as possible, with ropes or iron bands, and besides the cost of these the railway freight is increased, and on that account they insist on large allowances, averaging probably Rs. 5 per bale. It is impossible to calculate with accuracy the

amount which importers have to pay away, but it will probably aggregate not less than Rs. 130,000 per annum in Calcutta alone.

From a return supplied by the Collector of Customs, the Committee find that there have, during the past six months, been discovered in the Custom House eight instances of misdescription of grey cotton piece-goods declared as falling under the duty-free standard, and these are particularized as follows:—

Penalties have been imposed: Liable to penalty but duty only imposed.

5 lots containing 30 bales. 3 lots containing 43 bales.

It may be assumed that the Collector in those instances where no penalty was inflicted, was satisfied either that the misdescription was accidental, or that any fine yarns discovered in the cloths had found their way there by inadvertence; and, if so, it would appear that out of about 120,000 bales of duty-free goods, imported during the half-year, only 30 bales were found to be wrongly described.

Under these circumstances it seems to the Committee a great misfortune that it should be necessary to open up so many bales,—a practice which involves labour at the Custom House and such a very serious tax on merchants, without apparently any direct gain to Government.

They, of course, would not propose that so long as any grey goods are liable to duty the examination should be done away with, but they are of opinion that a much more partial examination, and one which would at the same time sufficiently meet the object of protecting the revenue, might be adopted.

Each bale is bound with 4 or 5 iron bands; if only one, or at most two, of these, were removed, the contents might receive a partial examination quite sufficient, in most cases, to shew whether there was any doubt as to the contents having been properly described. This removal of only one hoop would not necessitate re-packing nor extra railway freight, and if the plan were adopted there would probably be no need of making allowances to the dealers, and consequently a great saving would be effected to importers.

The Committee are quite aware that their proposal would not allow of such a thorough examination as the Collector might think necessary in strictly following out Government instructions, but they contend that it would be quite sufficient to meet the necessities of the case, considering that the quantity of goods wrongly described is so small, and that the more partial examination could never have the effect of encouraging fraud.

The Committee do not think it necessary or desirable at present to enter into the larger question of the entire abolition of duty on all grey goods and yarns, knowing that this is having the anxious consideration of the Government, and that the duties will be removed when it is found possible to dispense with the revenue so collected without incurring the necessity of imposing taxes in other probably more objectionable forms.

From Government of India to Chamber.

No. 2951, *Simla the* 12*th September* 1881.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 30th ultimo, and to forward copy of a letter

which has this day been addressed to the Government of Bengal on the subject. A further communication will, in due course, be made to the Chamber.

From Government of India to Govt. of Bengal.

No. 2950, *Simla, the* 12*th September* 1881.

I am directed to forward copy of a letter from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce representing that importers of duty-free grey piece-goods sustain a serious loss in consequence of the practice of opening out one bale in every shipment of cloth declared to contain no yarn finer than 30s.

2. I am to request that the Chamber's representation may be taken into consideration, and a report thereon furnished to the Government of India with reference to the correspondence ending with your letter No. 446-33C, dated the 21st February 1880. The Government of India, I am to add, would be glad to receive any suggestions for a modification of the present practice, which, while retaining complete security for the revenue, can also secure importers from any appreciable loss by deterioration of the marketable value of their goods.

PROPOSAL BY RAILWAY COMPANIES TO ADOPT A STANDARD WEIGHT OF A SEER OF 2 POUNDS.

It came before the Committee that a somewhat peculiar proposal had been submitted to the Government of India by the representatives of

guaranteed railways, namely, that in all their transactions they should be permitted to make use of a seer of 2lbs. avoirdupois.

To the Committee it appeared that the calculations of railway officials would thus be simplified at the cost of much and constant inconvenience to the public; who, moreover, would apparently have to pay for carriage 2½ per cent. more than before. A representation in this sense was submitted to the Government, and the Committee are gratified to find that the railways are to continue to use the bazaar maund and its subdivisions, until a more equitable arrangement than that proposed can be found.

The question thus raised brings up afresh that of the numerous and discordant systems of weights and measures which obtain in India, and it will be satisfactory if it leads to the adoption of a more uniform system.

From Chamber to the Government of India.

Calcutta, 18*th July* 1881.

The Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce have had their attention directed to a memorandum signed by the representatives of various Indian Railways, from which it appears that these Companies are seeking the sanction of the Supreme Government for the adoption by the Railways of a weight of their own, *viz.*, a seer of 2lbs. avoirdupois.

The argument advanced in support of their proposal is that it would facilitate the conversion of Indian maunds into English tons, and *vice versâ*.

The Committee, however, desire me to point out that, unless the Government of India is prepared to alter the standard of weight of the Empire in conformity with the views of the Railway Companies, no such convenient consequence as that imagined would follow.

The true results attained would be—

1. that the Railways would charge freight on English weight under another name ;

2, that, as compared with present rates, the public would have to pay $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ more for carriage, and that, in order to relieve the Railway accountants from the trouble of certain calculations, the annoyance of similar calculations would be thrown upon every trader every time he sent or received goods by rail.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce are not insensible to the advantages which would result from the introduction of a system of uniform weights and measures throughout India, for the present diversity of standards which exists in almost every province and district is very puzzling, and often leads to much confusion in the conduct of business transactions with the interior. This evil is of long standing, and ten years ago an attempt was made to apply a remedy by the passing of Act XXXI. of 1871. That Act, however, was in opposition to the views of the majority of a Committee appointed by Government in 1869 to consider the subject, and has never been enforced.

The standard of weights now proposed by the Railways is that recommended by the Committee above mentioned, but it seems doubtful whether public opinion in this country is ripe for any immediate change. My Committee think it desirable that further inquiry should be made on this point; and meantime they deprecate the introduction of a new and special weight for use only on the Railways, as they think that such a course would only aggravate the confusion and inconvenience already existing. The Committee respectfully submit that in any case Government sanction should be withheld until the present Railway schedules of rates have been revised, so that the cost of transporting a given weight of merchandise under the system advocated should be no more than at present.

From Government of India.

No. 1123—R.T., *Simla, 27th September* 1881.

The following is forwarded to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce in reply to their Secretary's letter of the 18th July 1881.

By order,

FRED. FIREBRACE, CAPT., R. E.,
Under-Secretary,

Copy of letter No. 1122—R. T, dated 27th September 1881, from the Secretary to the Government of India, Public Works Department, to the Consulting Engineer to the Government of India for guaranteed Railways Calcutta.

I am directed to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 2193 of the 19th July 1881, submitting a proposal advocated by the Agents of the several guaranteed Railway Companies for the adoption of a standard seer equal to 2lbs. avoirdupois in regard to all transactions with which Railways are in any way connected.

2. In reply, I am to state that after full and careful consideration of the question, the Government of India is unable to approve of the standard seer being fixed at 2lbs. avoirdupois.

3. Proposals similar to those now put forward were thoroughly discussed prior to the passing of Act XXXI. of 1871, and then condemned, and the objections then raised are equally valid now.

4. The advantages of a system of uniform weights and measures throughout India are fully recognised by the Government, and it was with the view of gaining this end that the Act above quoted was passed, the terms of which were intended for general adoption.

Until the Government of India should have an opportunity of reconsidering this Act, and the question generally, I am to desire that the maund of 82·29lbs. may be continued in all traffic relations of Indian Railways in accordance with Public Works Department Resolution Nos. 0110-0114—R.T., dated 30th January 1880.

EAST INDIAN RAILWAY COMPANY:—

RATES FOR GRAIN AND SEED.

The Committee continue to press this matter on the attention both of Government and of the

Railway Executive. If the East Indian Railway are left unfettered in the matter, the Committee believe they will be prepared to give Calcutta the benefit of the advantage they enjoy in being able to carry goods at a lower rate per mile than any other line in India. The letter from the Government, it will be seen, states that rates will be regulated on the principle of fair and equal profits to the lines which serve Calcutta and Bombay respectively. If that principle is carried out in its integrity, the Committee are satisfied it must result in a very considerable diminution of the through rates both for upward and downward goods, and they trust the pledge given by Government in this matter will be fulfilled.

From Chamber to Government of India.

Calcutta, 15th September 1881.

The Committee of this Chamber desire to draw your attention to an announcement on the part of the East Indian Railway, now appearing in the Calcutta daily papers, to the effect that the reduced rates for grain and seeds, which came into force on 15th July, will be discontinued on and after the 1st of next month.

The impetus given to the trade of this port, particularly in wheat and all descriptions of oilseeds, except linseed and poppyseed, by the reduction in question, has been very remarkable, as a reference to the comparative statement appended to this letter will shew; and it appears to

the Committee to be a step of a very impolitic kind on the part of the Railway Company to revert to old rates at a time when the reduction is telling so unmistakeably in their favor, and when the competition on the part of Bombay is so very keen.

In connection with the competition referred to, the Committee direct me to forward for your information copy of a letter they addressed to the Government of Bengal on the 30th ultimo. As an illustration of the natural advantages Bombay possesses over Calcutta in the matter of sea freight, owing to its greater proximity to Europe, I may state that the latest quotation for freight of wheat from that port to Liverpool, *vid* Suez Canal, is 41*s*. 3*d*. per ton of 16 cwt, while the rate from Calcutta is 70*s*. per ton of 20 cwt. Adding one-fourth to the Bombay rate to make it equal to the Calcutta ton, the respective rates are—

Bombay	£2	11	6
Calcutta	£3	10	0
Difference in favor of Bombay ...	£0	18	6

per ton of 20 cwt.

The reduced rate at which the E. I. Railway Company have been carrying grain and seeds during the last four weeks was equal to 5*s*. per ton, and has enabled Calcutta to hold its own in the competition witht he Western port. If, however, this extra 5*s*. is added to the cost, the scale will again incline in favor of Bombay, and the remunerative traffic which the E. I. Railway now enjoy will, in all probability, be diverted into other channels.

The Committee believe that the Government, who now possess a proprietary interest in the working of that line,

would do well to make enquiry into the facts stated above, with a view to steps being taken to an early and thorough revision of the E. I. Railway Company's tariff. The Committee urge this quite as much in the interests of the E. I. Railway Company as in those of the mercantile community of Calcutta, the two being very much bound up together. While recognising the fact that the extension of railway communication between Western and Northern and Central India must tend much more in favor of Bombay than of Calcutta, owing to the situation of the former, they deprecate any course which would tend to handicap Calcutta trade more than is the case at present. That the raising of railway rates at the present moment will have this effect, the Committee regard as incontestable, and if, as they believe it to be the case, it would pay the railway to permanently lower their tariff rates, it seems a short-sighted policy, from every point of view, not to adopt such a plan.

The letter to the Government of Bengal, dated the 30th August and referred to above will be found at page 155.

Table shewing the arrivals of Seeds and Wheat at Howrah Station.

1880.	Linseed.	Rapeseed.	Popryseed.	Teelseed.	Castor-seed.	Wheat.
Week ending the 17th July ...	72,853	7 765	16,076	446	———	79,322
,, ,, ,, 24th ,, ...	100.468	11.250	23,095	2,949	———	104,542
,, ,, ,, 31st ,, ...	66,032	5,286	6,103	275	579	59.746
,, ,, ,, 7th August ...	60,395	3,831	5,103	1,365	316	83,382
,, ,, ,, 14th ,, ...	50,303	2,477	11,724	274	823	25,008
,, ,, ,, 21st ,, ...	54,642	786	5.638	———	550	38,007
,, ,, ,, 28th ,, ...	64,100	794	89,739	280	276	45,168
,, ,, ,, 4th September...	69.340	1,767	21,931	———	279	46,456
,, ,, ,, 11th ,, ...	77,273	4,144	21,029	———	———	26,544
1881.	615,406	38,100	150,438	5589	2,823	458,175
,, ,, ,, 16th July ...	47,662	36.610	23 510	9,651	2,776	100.678
,, ,, ,, 23rd ,, ...	69,220	36,950	22,112	6;955	5.451	145.096
,, ,, ,, 30th ,, ...	66,322	51,119	11,069	7,364	2.449	138,811
,, ,, ,, 6th August ...	56.785	89,209	14,348	2,650	1,599	135,784
,, ,, ,, 13th ,, ...	49,500	86,236	13.566	2,927	723	127,696
,, ,, ,, 20th ,, ...	62,820	45.856	9,811	1,351	1,934	229.904
,, ,, ,, 27th ,, ...	55,228	45,123	8.609	3 581	801	269,950
,, ,, ,, 3rd September	50.459	38,140	4,625	1.425	415	391,418
,, ,, ,, 10th ,, ..	25,123	28,502	4,509	1,996	554	477,135
	483,119	357,745	111,659	37,900	16,202	2,016,472

CALCUTTA,
The 14th September 1881.

From Government of India to Chamber.

No. 1193 R. T. *Simla, 20th October* 1881.

In reply to your letter dated 15th September 1881, addressed to the Secretary to Government of India, Department of Finance and Commerce, on the subject of reducing the rates charged by the East Indian Railway Company for the carriage of grain so as to equalize the advantages enjoyed by the Bombay port by low sea freight, I am directed to state that the Government of India is devoting its attention to the subject of through charges, and that the prevailing rates to Calcutta and Bombay will be regulated, as far as possible, without partiality to either port on the principle of fair and equal profits on the lines of railway which serve them respectively.

EAST INDIA RAILWAY: RATES FOR COTTON GOODS.

From Chamber to East Indian Railway Co.

Calcutta, 20th July 1881.

In the Chamber's letters of the 26th March and 6th April, your attention was specially drawn to the reductions that had been made by the Bombay, Baroda and Central India, and the Great Indian Peninsular Railway Companies in their charges for the carriage of cotton manufactures to the North-West Provinces and the Punjab.

The Committee have been disappointed in not receiving a reply to their representations on this important point; and they desire me to submit the matter again

for your attention, trusting it will be in your power to favor them with an early communication of the measures which the Railway Company have decided to adopt.

From the East Indian Railway Co. to Chamber.

No. 9418. *Calcutta, 26th July* 1881.

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th instant, and also of the previous communications in which the Chamber have drawn attention to the reductions made by the Bombay lines in the rates for piece-goods, &c., despatched to the North-West Provinces and beyond. The subject received my careful consideration, and having early entered into correspondence with the Agents and Managers of the other lines concerned, I had trusted daily to have been able to inform the Chamber that an arrangement placing the rates from Bombay and Calcutta upon the same level had been concluded. I regret, however, that owing to the number of divergent interests, I am not yet in a position to do so. I am, however, endeavouring to expedite matters, and do not anticipate much further delay. Any isolated action of the Company would have been useless, as the shorter mileage to the principal up-country piece-goods markets would have enabled the Bombay, Baroda and Central India and Rajputana State Railways to meet each alteration in rate on the East Indian Railway by a still further reduction.

From East Indian Railway to Chamber.

Calcutta, 15th November 1881.

Dear Sir,

With reference to the advertisement of rates for piece-goods from Howrah to Agra and Delhi, dated the 1st August last, and to the notice on fly-leaf VI. of the Current Goods Tariff, I beg to inform you that on and from 1st January next, the rate for piece-goods, yarn, and cotton twist in bales, pressed and bound, or in boxes, despatched from and to all stations on the East Indian Railway will be at the ordinary second-class charge of 50 pies per 100 maunds per mile.

The rate from Howrah to Delhi will, however, be the same as to Ghaziabad, *viz.*, Rs. 245 per 100 maunds exclusive of Hooghly bridge toll.

Yours faithfully,
D. W. CAMPBELL,
Acting Agent.

E. I. RAILWAY CO.'S TARIFF OF CHARGES.

D. W. CAMPBELL, Esq.,
Acting Agent of the East India Railway Company.

The humble Memorial of the undersigned Shroffs, Mahajuns and Dealers trading from Calcutta to and from the North-West Provinces and the Punjab.

Sheweth,—

That your Memorialists have been in most cases, for many years, engaged largely in the trade and

business of shroffs, dealers in produce, and in cotton manufactures, with the interior of this country, mostly with Mirzapore and all marts northwards to the chief cities of the Punjab.

That up to about the beginning of the current year, your Memorialists had little, if any, cause for serious complaint of the charges for carriage down or up of produce or cotton manufactures; and, if they had, the Company you represent has, at almost all times, heeded their complaints and granted them reasonable redress.

That since the opening of the Western Rajputana Railway, *viâ* Sabamattee, your Memorialists have had represented to them several times by their co-partners and principals in the interior, the cheaper rates of carriage of their merchandize from and to Bombay, than from and to Calcutta; and it is a matter of painful regret to your Memorialists that several firms of good repute have lately, in consequence, opened agencies in, and sent representatives to, Bombay, to avail themselves of the cheaper rates of transit adverted to. Your Memorialists have in several instances been requested *to lessen their business from Calcutta* as the inevitable consequence.

That your Memorialists hear from their principals and friends, and believe, from the figures shown to them, that the merchants of Bombay can lay in imports of all kinds at a cheaper rate than those of Calcutta, because they pay less for freight and insurance than is paid to Calcutta, and therefore they can afford to undersell the Calcutta merchants in almost every article. Similarly in exports, Bombay shippers can afford to pay a higher first cost for bulky produce than Calcutta shippers, because of the lower rates of freight and insurance from Bombay to

European ports. Of these facts your Memorialists are prepared to supply evidence if required.

Your Memorialists are thus heavily handicapped in managing their business through Calcutta, Bombay being the better market for them and for their principals in the interior.

Your Memorialists need not point out to you the difference in the rates of carriage in favor of Bombay and to the prejudice of Calcutta, as they are well known to you; but they would respectfully draw your attention to the very heavy shipments of *grain* and *oilseeds* to date this year from Bombay as compared with previous years in proof that the trade formerly done, for the most part through your Memorialists in Calcutta, is being rapidly diverted to Bombay; and the upward trade from Calcutta, must, your Memorialists feel assured, follow in the like manner, unless it is checked by a timely lessening of the rates of carriage by the East Indian Railway to and from Mirzapore and all the intervening marts up to Mooltan.

Your Memorialists are also aware, and would respectfully point out, that the Bombay trade in imports with the marts of the North-West and Punjab has largely increased, and it must further materially increase if the present state of things is allowed to continue.

Your Memorialists beg leave to explain that, though a reduction in the mileage rate would of course afford them some measure of relief, it will not be sufficient to enable them to maintain their position. What is required to prevent their business going out of their hands is, *such a reduction in the maundage rate for goods carried as will prevent any handicap as compared with Bombay.*

This is the great point; and your Memorialists would respectfully request your special attention to it as the great consideration in settling this, to them, most important question.

Your Memorialists have no hesitation in giving it as their opinion that the handicap on Calcutta merchants is of itself sufficient to divert trade to Bombay to some extent; and if, besides this, differential rates of Railway carriage for merchandise are continued in favor of the Western Presidency, your Memorialists must, in many instances, give up their business here and proceed to Bombay—that being the better market for the bulky staples referred to, and the cheaper market from whence to lay down imports of all kinds.

Your Memorialists need hardly remark that any action tending to divert the trade of the Upper Provinces and the Puujab to Bombay must, of necessity, lessen the earnings of the East Indian Railway, and the appearances now are that the revenue from the traffic has been curtailed by the causes herein referred to.

Your Memorialists humbly hope that you will be pleased to take this memorial, and the representations it contains into your early consideration; and further, that you will be pleased to forward same to the proper authorities, to the London Agency, and to the Government of India, in order that the relief herein prayed for by them may be given before it is too late to avert the evil to the trade of this city now brought under your notice.

And your Memorialists will ever pray.

[Here follow the signatures of about 150 Calcutta Shroffs, Mahajans and Dealers.]

No. 799-T.

Transferred to the Public Works Department of this Government in the Railway Branch for disposal. The Lieutenant-Governor thinks that the opinion of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce might be invited on this Memorial.

By order, &c.,

(Sd.) A. MACKENZIE,
Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal.

DARJEELING:
REV. DEPARTMENT,
Land Revenue,
The 22nd July 1881.

No. 2355 R.

Copy forwarded to the Secretary to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce for favor of their opinion on the subject.

By order, &c.,

(Sd.) O. HŒRNLE,
Assistant Secretary.

P. W. D. BENGAL:
Railway,
The 5th August 1881.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 30th August 1881.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your endorsement No. 2355-R, dated the 5th instant, in which you ask for an expression of opinion from this Chamber upon representations made by certain Shroffs, Mohajuns

and Dealers, in a memorial addressed to the Agent of the East Indian Railway Company

The matters treated of in this memorial have formed the subject of several letters from my Committee to the Agent of the East Indian Railway Company.

In particular, I am to invite your attention to my letters of the 26th March and 6th April last—copies of both annexed—in which stress is laid upon the "necessity of a timely movement towards a reduced scale of charges," in order to preserve traffic and check the increasing diversion to Bombay of the trade of Calcutta.

In acknowledging these letters the Agent to the Railway Company, on the 26th ultimo, informed the Chamber that he was trying to conclude arrangements with other lines, such as would place "rates from Bombay and Calcutta upon the same level." Meantime concessions have been made in downward rates on produce from certain stations, and in upward rates on piece-goods to Agra and Delhi.

These reductions, however, are explained to be temporary and experimental only, and the Committee fear that they will be found insufficient to satisfy the urgency and importance of the case.

It is true that, according to the most recently revised schedules of rates, actual and proposed, the cost of transit per 100 maunds of cotton, grain, and seeds from Agra and Delhi, and of piece-goods to these towns, is less to and from Howrah than over either of the Bombay lines; but if Calcutta is to retain its present share of trade with the North-West, the East Indian Railway must be

prepared to go further, and to work at such rates as will make the total cost of land and sea carriage to and from Europe *viâ* Calcutta no more than they are *viâ* Bombay.

In other words, our inland transit must be so cheapened as to neutralize the saving in sea freight and insurance which the Bombay merchant enjoys. Even after this has been done, the Calcutta trader will have to struggle against a loss in time for which no remedy can well be found.

The Committee would respectfully urge that a thorough revision of the goods tariff should be undertaken in the spirit of these remarks, and that this revision should not be confined to a few articles or to selected stations, but should cover the entire system of traffic, and should include in its scrutiny the various terminal charges now levied. An inquiry should also be made into whether the East India Railway affords to traders, as fully as it might do, those facilities for business which in many cases are as important as cheap carriage.

I am desired, in conclusion, to submit for your information copy of a circular letter which, on the 30th June, the Committee addressed to all members of the Chamber. His Honor will see that this very important matter is engaging the earnest attention of the Committee, who, in the present communication, are to some extent anticipating the more detailed representations which, hereafter, it is proposed to submit to the Railway Company

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[*Continuation of correspondence at page* 291.]

EAST INDIAN RAILWAY:— COMPETITION WITH THE COAL TRADE OF BENGAL.

The subjoined correspondence will be read with satisfaction, as it points to the termination of a grievance which the Coal Companies have for some time laboured under.

Government of India to Chamber.

No. 612 R.C., *Simla, 16th August* 1881.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your Secretary's letter dated the 23rd March last, regarding the practice of the East Indian Railway Company in producing supplies of coal from their Kurhurballee and Serampore coal fields in excess of their own requirements, and in disposing of such surplus coal to other coal consuming concerns to the detriment of the several commercial Companies trading in coal.

2. The matter is one which had already occupied the attention of His Excellency the Governor-General in Council before the receipt of your letter, and the Government of India is now in possession of the orders of Her Majesty's Secretary of State on the points referred.

It will be observed from the Secretary of State's dispatch, a copy of which is enclosed for information, that Her Majesty's Government has decided that the East Indian Railway Company, as at present placed in reference to their Act and Contract, cannot lawfully work their collie-

ries except for the purposes of their own undertaking and for any branch lines of railway worked directly by them.

4. Orders have in consequence been issued to the Railway Company, through the Consulting Engineer for Railways in Calcutta, to regulate their output of coal, as far as possible, in accordance with their own demands, and to withdraw from their agreements with other Railways for the monthly supply of coal and coke on the earliest date that the agreements will permit, without involving the Railway Company in breach of contract.

5. By a little foresight, it is believed that the sales of surplus coal need not be so large as in any way to affect the interests of the private Companies, but such sales may now and then be necessary, and the inferior descriptions of coal which are necessarily brought up with the good will have to be disposed of. However, not more inferior coal will be allowed to be raised than is obligatory in order to get the description of coal required for the undertaking, and in order to prevent all competition in the Calcutta market, all sales of coal by the Railway Company have been ordered to take place at the pit's mouth by public auction to the best advantage of the Company.

6. By attention to these orders, the Government of India believes that the East Indian Railway Company will not exceed the powers granted them and all danger of competition with the Colliery Companies will be avoided.

No. 81.—*London,* 16*th June* 1881.

To His Excellency The Most Honorable

The Governor-General of India in Council.

My Lord Marquis, -

Para 1. I forward herewith copy of a letter* which has been addressed to this office by the Bengal Coal Company, and of the correspondence which has ensued.

* Letter from Bengal Coal Company, dated 8th March 1881, and enclosures
Ditto to ditto, dated 30th March 1881.
Ditto to East India Railway Company, dated 30th March 1881.
Ditto from ditto, dated 3rd May 1881, No 45, and enclosures.
Ditto from Bengal Coal Company, dated 18th May 1881.
Ditto to ditto, dated 1st June 1881.
Ditto from ditto 15th

2. The Board of the East Indian Railway Company state that the information before them is to the effect that surplus stocks only had been disposed of, the sales to the general public having been confined to "rubble" and "smithy" coal, for which the Company has no use, and the whole quantity raised not having been in excess of anticipated reasonable requirements, while the quantity sold was only a portion of what had accumulated owing to a lull in the traffic.

3. It is not clear to me how this statement can be reconciled with the fact, which is not questioned, of the Agent of the Company having entered into a contract for supplying the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Company with 18,000 tons of coal, by monthly instalments of 1,500 tons. But, however this may be, it is not surprising that the Bengal Coal Company should view with jealousy what, at all events, has the appearance, on the part of the Railway Company of trading in coal to the detriment of the

various coal companies, and I request that the matter may receive your attention.

4. The Act and the Contract under which the Company is now placed leave no room for doubt that the Company cannot lawfully work the collieries except for the purposes of the undertaking, and it is necessary that their operations should be confined to what is calculated to be requisite for raising the probable quantity of coal required for the undertaking and for any branches worked by the Company. If, after taking due precaution to avoid any excessive output, a surplus should remain, or any inferior description of coal should be raised unfitted for the purposes of the Company, such surplus or refuse may properly be sold to the best advantage, but apart from this the Company, as managers of the undertaking, should not be permitted to take up the position of competition in the general market with those who have embarked capital in mining enterprise.

5. I am advised that the Act, on which the new contract with the Company is based, will not admit of the Company working the collieries for the purpose of supplying the State Railways not immediately worked by the Company nor the Guaranteed Railways; and consequently, so far as such a practice has hitherto prevailed, it should be discontinued.

6. I am not in a position to form an opinion as to the result of the stoppage of the supply of coal from the pits worked by the Company to the State Railways or whether any serious inconvenience is likely to be caused thereby. As, however, the agency of the Company can no longer be made use of in procuring any

such supply, if it be of importance to continue it, there would seem to be no other course open than to employ other persons to work the pits for this purpose, if the Company did not raise objections; otherwise the inconvenience, whatever it may be, appears unavoidable.

I have the honor to be,
MY LORD MARQUIS,
Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,
(Sd.) HARTINGTON.

NORTHERN BENGAL STATE RAILWAY.

A representation which the Committee made on this subject resulted in a substantial reduction in rates charged for carriage of tea. The Agents of the Darjeeling Railway, it will be seen, point out the difficulties they laboured under during the past season in working the line, and think the Committee did not make sufficient allowance for in the letter this they addressed to Government. No doubt, the working arrangements will be more perfect during the coming season, now that the difficulties incident to all new undertakings have been overcome.

From the Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 12th May 1881.

It has been brought to the notice of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce that the rates charged for carriage of tea on the Northern Bengal State Railway are very largely in excess of the rates levied on the Eastern Bengal Railway. The respective rates on the two systems of Railway are as follows :—

Northern Bengal State Railway,
Silligoorie to Damookdeah, ... through rate Re. 1-2-0 per md.
distance 196 miles=1·10 pies per md. per mile.
Eastern Bengal Railway,
Damookdeah to Calcutta, ... through rate Re. 0-6-8 per md.
distance 116 miles =0·69 pies per md. per mile.

Were the Northern Bengal State Railway to carry tea at the same mileage rate as the Eastern Bengal Railway, the through rate for tea from Silligoorie to Damookdeah would be about 11 annas 4 pies in place of Re. 1-2 per maund, or a reduction of 6 annas 8 pies per maund.

The Committee observe that the Eastern Bengal Railway charge tea at their second class rate, and the Darjeeling Steam Tramway do the same, while the Northern Bengal State Railway charge it at very nearly their highest, or third class rate. The Committee submit, with much confidence, that no valid reason can exist for charging tea at a higher class rate on the Northern Bengal State Railway than on the other two systems with which it is connected : and if it is the case, as they have been informed, that the Northern Bengal State Railway is now earning 4 %, there can be no financial objection to the reduction. If Government do not see their way to reduce rates on the Northern

Bengal State Railway to the precise level of the Eastern Bengal Railway, the classification of the older Railway system, with which it is connected, ought at all events to be adopted. This would place tea in the second class, which would be equivalent to a reduction of five annas four pies per maund, being the difference between the present special rate of ... ...Re. 1 2 0, and the second class rate ... ... „ 0 12 8

Re. 0 5 4

The Committee hope to hear that, on your submitting this representation to Government, the rates on the Northern Bengal State Railway will be at least assimilated to those charged by the Eastern Bengal Railway Company.

The Committee are not aware if it is within the province of the Government of Bengal to control the Darjeeling Steam Tramway in any way, but they desire me to say that great complaints have been brought to their notice of the detention and damage of goods entrusted to the Tramway Company for want of sufficient rolling-stock and accommodation for storing goods along the line. The Committee are aware, the line has only been recently opened, and they were hopeful the causes of complaint would be removed as time went on. Instead of that being the case, however, complaints are still very numerous; and as the rainy season is close at hand, the Committee fear that, unless pressure is brought to bear upon the Tramway Company by Government, in some form or other, to provide more ample facilities and improve the working of their line, a breakdown will occur at the

busiest season of the year now approaching, which cannot fail to be most disastrous to the interests concerned. The opening of the Tramway has led to the closing of other facilities for carriage in the Darjeeling district, thus giving the Tramway Company a virtual monopoly; and as very valuable concessions have likewise been granted to the Company by Government, the Committee are of opinion the authorities will be fully justified in stepping in to see that public interests are duly conserved, both as regards the mode of working the Tramway and the rates charged by them, which seem at present to be excessive.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.

No. 1778 R., *Calcutta, 30th June* 1881.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th May last, bringing to notice the great difference between the charges levied by the Northern Bengal and Eastern Bengal Railways for the carriage of tea, and, in reply, to state that your letter has been laid before the Lieutenant-Governor, who has, after careful consideration, directed that the rate on the Northern Bengal State Railway be reduced to 5-6th pie per maund per mile plus 1 anna and 7 pies for the ferry. The Lieutenant-Governor regrets that he cannot make any further reduction, as it was made a special stipulation by the Secretary of State, when sanctioning the construction of the line, that exceptionally high rates should be charged between Julpaiguri and Silliguri. I am also to point out that the double handling of the Ganges ferry at Sara and Damookdeah increases the cost and risk of damage.

2. With reference to your remark regarding the tea rate on the Darjeeling Steam Tramway, I am to point out that the second class rate on the Tramway is four times the third class rate on the Northern Bengal State Railway. The Company have, however, been addressed with a view to reducing their excessive downward charges on tea.

3. I am also to state that the Tramway Company have been urged to construct proper sheds for the reception of tea at their various stations.

From Darjeeling Steam Tramway Co., Ld., to the Government of Bengal.

No. 530—*Calcutta, 28th June* 1881.

We have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 77 R, dated 20th June, handing us copy of a letter from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, dated Calcutta, 12th May last.

In reply to your remarks we are instructed to say that the Company has throughout had ample rolling-stock on the line to carry all the tea produced in the Darjeeling District, and that there never has been any difficulty in regard to carrying downwards. The only difficulty has been in respect to carriage upwards, owing to a large portion of the rolling-stock being of necessity employed in carriage of materials for construction.

Temporary sheds for ware-housing tea at the stations where permanent godowns have not yet been provided have already been arranged for, and will be completed with as little delay as possible.

The Directors have already notified considerable reduction in downward rates, but in regard to upward rates it must be borne in mind that the cost of haulage is considerable. The Directors will duly consider if any further reduction, especially in rates for tea, is possible, but would point out that when the present reduction comes into force rates will be 20 per cent. below the charges hitherto made by the Cart Carrying Companies, and that tea will be brought down (dry and in good condition) in about one-tenth the time occupied by carts. It should further be remembered that the tramway, having brought a cheap and plentiful supply of rice into the district, attracts a plentiful supply of labor to tea gardens which tends to reduce the price of labour, the heaviest item of outlay in the production of tea.

With regard to the remarks of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce we would say that they were, we believe, to a great extent written in ignorance of the circumstances under which the tramway has been carried on, and that no application was ever made for any information.

(Sd.) GILLANDERS, ARBUTHNOT & Co.,
Secretaries.

No 1961.—R.

Copy forwarded to the Secretary to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, for information, in continuation of No. 1778 R., dated 30th ultimo.

By order of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal,

W. WARDEN,
Assistant Secretary.

CALCUTTA,
The 12*th July* 1881.

TARIFF ON INLAND TELEGRAPHIC MESSAGES.

In their remarks introductory to the correspondence on this subject which appeared in the half-yearly report ending 31st October 1880, the Committee expressed the hope that a material reduction of the tariff might be sanctioned before long. They are glad that the representations they made have borne fruit, and that the Government, as will be seen from the copy of the Resolution hereto appended, dated 14th November, have made several concessions of an important character. The Committee, whilst grateful for these, confidently expect that the financial result of the changes will be such as to justify the Government in making further reductions.

Nos. 169-90—T., Government of India, Public Works Department, Civil Works, Telegraph, Simla, May 31st, 1881.

Read the following :—

Resolution by the Government of India, No. 373-81—T, dated 5th October 1880.

Letter from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, dated 15th November 1880.

Letter from the Madras Chamber of Commerce, dated 29th November 1880.

Letter from the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, dated 15th December 1880.

Letter from the Government of Bombay, No. 20 T,—1460, dated 21st December 1880.

OBSERVATIONS.—In the Resolution of 5th October 1880, now read, the Government of India reviewed the suggestions which had been put forward by the Government of Bombay and the Chambers of Commerce of Bengal and Bombay for the modification of the inland telegraph tariff. In this review it was shown that, in comparison with the rates in force in other countries, the Indian inland tariff was moderate, and that the expectation that a reduction in the tariff would necessarily be followed by an expansion of business and an increase of revenue did not seem to be justified by past experience.

It was remarked that the Government of India was not prepared to adopt any revision of the tariff, the effect of which would be to burden the general revenues, in order that the senders of telegrams might be enabled to transmit them at a lower rate than the cost price; and that in any future modification of the tariff the object of rendering the telegraph service self-supporting must be steadily kept in view. But at the same time His Excellency the Governor-General in Council, in publishing the Resolution, invited further enquiry into the facts on which the conclusions were based, and expressed willingness to forward any scheme for developing and facilitating communication by telegraph, so far as it could confidently be adopted without risk to the interests of the tax-paying community.

2. The letters now read from the Government of Bombay and the Chambers of Commerce of Bengal, Bombay, and Madras on this subject show that, while the necessity of rendering the telegraph service self-supporting is freely recognised, there is still a widespread conviction that this end would not be endangered, but rather furthered, by a revision of the tariff.

3. In support of these views, the growth of business of the telegraph administration of the Australian colonies is again brought forward and quoted as an instance of what can be achieved under a liberal system of management. The figures adduced have been carefully scrutinised by the Government of India; and although it appears that the Australian business has gained about 50 per cent. *relatively* on the Indian business, the *actual* increase of business during the last ten years has been two-and-a-half times as great in India as in Australia. In India the gross revenue from private traffic has increased from 15 lakhs of Rupees in 1872-73 to upwards of 25 lakhs of Rupees in 1879-80, and the increase in revenue from private messages alone has been more than double the increase of revenue from all sources in Australia. It would appear from these figures that the rates in force in India have not so far had any markedly injurious effect on the expansion of traffic.

4. But taking into consideration this rapid development with the present tariff, and the fact that during the past year the revenue from private messages alone (excluding the value of "State" and "free" messages) has only fallen short of the working expenses of the Department by Rs. 5,128, it appears to His Excellency

the Governor-General in Council that there is no further financial necessity for withholding altogether the concessions sought for, and the time has now come when more liberal terms and greater facilities for using the telegraph, which are so earnestly contended for, may safely be offered to the public.

5. The directions in which change is most desired appear to be—

I.—The introduction of a word rate for all words in excess of the established minimum unit.

II.—The re-introduction of a sliding scale of charges in proportion to distance, and the establishment of cheap *local* telegraph services.

III.—The partial amalgamation of the telegraph with the postal services so as to secure economy of working.

IV.—The encouragement to telephone enterprise as an adjunct to the telegraph service.

6. With regard to the first point, His Excellency the Governor-General in Council is pleased to decide that from the 1st July next the charge for each word beyond the established minimum unit of one rupee for six words shall be two annas per word.

With regard to the second point, His Excellency the Governor-General in Council has already authorised the establishment of town telegraph services at a reduced rate, wherever there may be demand, the details of which will shortly be published in *the Gazette of India*. Further than this His Excellency is not at present

inclined to go in this direction. The introduction of a differential tariff into the general telegraph system appears to be too retrograde a step to be seriously entertained.

The third point is one of great importance. The only feature in which the Indian telegraph system at present compares unfavourably with the Australian system is in the number of telegraph offices, and one of the reasons of the advantages enjoyed in Australia in this respect is probably to be found in the union of the Postal whith the Telegraph Department. If the use of the telegraph is to be largely extended, it can only be so by a very great increase in the number of offices, and by spreading these offices widely over the country ; and if the cost of the convenience is to be kept within the means of the classes for whom it is intended, the cost of the offices must be reduced to the lowest limit compatible with efficiency. In many remote places there will never be work enough to pay for a special signaller ; hence the extension of the telegraph to such places must be contingent on other remunerative work being available for the agency employed. The possibility of introducing a change in this direction will receive careful consideration, but the present time is inopportune, owing to the recent large expansion of business in the Postal Department.

With regard to the fourth point, His Excellency the Governor-General in Council has already decided to permit the establishment and working of telephone exchanges by private enterprise ; and it is hoped that a commencement will ere long be made.

7. With a view to the more rapid extension of the telegraph system, His Excellency the Governor-General

in Council is further pleased to empower local Governments and Administrations, within the usual restrictions as to amount of budget allotments and power of sanction, to authorise the Telegraph Department to erect any lines and open any offices that they may require on paying the first cost and the annual charges for maintenance and working, retaining as a set-off the earnings of the lines as represented by the payments into the offices working them. Should a local Government or Administration wish to abandon a line so made, it would be credited with the value of stores recovered after deducting the cost of dismantling and collecting.

8. The Government of India looks to the Director-General of Telegraphs to suggest any further measures which may tend towards the attainment of these objects.

ORDER—Ordered that a copy of this Resolution be communicated to the local Governments and Administrations noted in the margin for information.

The Governments of Madras, Bombay, Bengal, the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, and the Punjab, in the Public Works Department.
The Chief Commissioners, Central Provinces, British Burmah, and Assam.
The Resident, Hyderabad.
The Agents to the Governor-General for Central India, Rajputana, and Beluchistan.

Also, that a copy be forwarded to the Chambers of Commerce, Bengal, Madras, Bombay, Rangoon, and Karachi.

Also, that a copy be forwarded to the Home, Revenue, and Agricultural Department of the Government of India for information, and to the Department of Finance

for information and communication to the Director General of Post Offices.

Also, that a copy be sent to the Director-General of Telegraphs for information and guidance,

And that this Resolution be published in the *Supplement to the Gazette of India.*

ALEX. FRASER, Major-General., R. E.,
Secretary to the Government of India.

No. 181 T. To the Secretary to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

Nos. 410-442 *T.*

Dated Simla, the 14*th November* 1881.

RESOLUTION by the Government of India, Public Works Department.

OBSERVATIONS.—In the Resolution of the 31st May 1881, His Excellency the Governor-General in Council authorised the introduction of a "word" rate of two annas a word for each word in excess of the minimum charge of one rupee for six words; and indicated the future policy of the Government of India with regard to the development of the telegraph service briefly as follows:—

The Government of India is willing and anxious to forward any scheme for developing and facilitating communication by telegraph, so far as this can be done

without risk to the interests of the general tax-paying community; but in the interests of that community it is essential that the telegraph service should be self-supporting.

The Government of India, as opportunity arises, will consider measures for the partial amalgamation of the telegraph and postal services so as to secure economy of working.

By the same Resolution the power to authorise the Telegraph Department to erect lines and open offices was, with certain necessary restrictions, extended to Local Governments and Administrations; and the Director-General of Telegraphs was desired to suggest further measures which might encourage the more extended use of the telegraph service by the public, without endangering the financial position of the Department.

In accordance with these orders, the Director-General of Telegraphs has submitted, for the approval of Government, a scheme for the revision of the tariff, which, while affording room for a very considerable further reduction in rates, will admit of a large expansion of the traffic, without necessitating additional expenditure or increasing the number of wires.

The main feature of this scheme consists in the introduction of arrangements which will permit of the disposal of message traffic in order of urgency, instead of, as at present, in order of presentation of messages.

Under the present system messages are, with very few exceptions, transmitted in order of receipt without any reference to their comparative urgency; in the case

of commercial and "state" telegrams, almost the whole of the messages sent are tendered for transmission during the business hours of the day; the result being a great pressure of work for a few hours, while for the rest of the day and night the wires are lying comparatively idle; and messages of great urgency are not infrequently delayed awaiting their turn for transmission, while the wires are occupied with messages of less importance in which a delay of some hours would be of no consequence whatever.

On the other hand, messages are delivered on arrival, at any hour of the day or night, irrespective of their urgency; they are frequently delayed in transit owing to the cause referred to above; and the addressees are needlessly disturbed at night by the receipt of telegrams on which no action can be taken until the followiug day.

It is obvious that the telegraph officials cannot be the judges of the comparative urgency of messages tendered for transmission; the selection must be made by the senders themselves; and in order to admit of this being done the more readily, the Director-General of Telegraphs proposes to introduce, in addition to the ordinary class of message, two other classes, "deferred" and "urgent."

Messages marked by senders as "deferred" will be received at any time during the working hours of the Telegraph Office, but will be transmitted at the convenience of the Telegraph Department on the understanding that they shall be delivered at their destination early on the following morning. Such messages would usually

be transmitted during the night, when the wires are comparatively free, and would be delivered at their destination through the Post Office with the first postal delivery, except at stations where such a procedure would entail too much delay.

Messages marked by the senders as "urgent" will have priority over all ordinary messages, and will be delivered immediately on arrival by special messenger.

Messages marked by the senders as "ordinary" will be dealt with in order of receipt as under the present system, but will yield priority to all "urgent" messages.

His Excellency the Governor-General in Council believes that the introduction of the "deferred" message system, as sketched out above, will prove a very great convenience to the public in improving the service for transmission of really urgent messages, and it will enable a large reduction in average cost of telegraphing to be made, owing to the facilities it would give for utilising the wires for a greater proportion of the twenty-four hours than is possible under the present system.

For "deferred" messages, which may be expected to comprise the great bulk of communications relating to such subjects as mercantile transactions effected, evening resumés of operations between corresponding firms, orders issued too late for execution the same day, modifications of orders already sent by post, and to most of the telegrams on domestic concerns, a very considerable reduction of cost will be possible; for ordinary messages the number of words to be allowed can be slightly increased with safety; but for "urgent" messages it will

be necessary to somewhat increase the cost, as the privilege of priority and delivery by special messenger which is accorded to such messages will, while adding considerably to their value to the sender, entail additional cost on the State. It is also necessary to make the rates for "urgent" messages sufficiently high to restrict such messages to really important communications, as otherwise the value of the priority obtained would be largely reduced.

His Excellency the Governor-General in Council is accordingly pleased to direct that the telegram rules be revised on this basis, and has approved of the following tariff.

The address to be transmitted free in all cases as at present.

Local messages, that is, messages tendered for transmission in ordinary course within a radius of six miles from a central telegraph office—

Four annas for each group of eight words or less.

Deferred messages, that is, messages tendered for transmission at the convenience of the telegraph Department, but to be delivered at destination early on the following morning—

Minimum charge eight annas for eight words or less, with one anna for each additional word in excess of eight.

Ordinary messages, that is, messages tendered for transmission and delivery in ordinary course—

Minimum charge one rupee for eight words or less, with two annas for each additional word in excess of eight.

Urgent messages, that is, messages tendered for immediate transmission, and delivery with priority over all "ordinary" messages—

Minimum charge two rupees for eight words or less, with four annas for each additional word in excess of eight.

Press messages to be subject to the same rates as above, but four times the number of words are allowed for each rate.

The revised rules and tariff published with this Resolution will come into force on the 1st January 1882.

His Excellency the Governor-General in Council is further pleased to direct that, with a view to reduce and to prevent the State business from unduly interfering with private message traffic, all State telegraph messages shall be sent as *deferred* unless specially marked as *urgent* by the sender, and that no State message shall be despatched as an *ordinary* message.

G. F. L. MARSHALL, Major, R.E.,
For Offg. Secy. to Govt. of India.

DELAY IN DELIVERY OF TELEGRAPH MESSAGES.

Complaints having reached the Committee that mercantile messages issued by the Telegraph Department were not being promptly delivered, a representation was made to the Director-General for more efficient arrangements; and the

Committee hope that their suggestion for establishing a branch office in the centre of the business part of the town will be adopted, and the delay and inconveniences brought to notice thereby removed.

From Chamber to the Director-General of Telegraphs.

Calcutta, 9th June 1881.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have been requested to address you in regard to the insufficiency of present arrangements for the delivery of inland telegraph messages.

I am accordingly directed to bring to your notice that the length of time occupied between the despatch of messages and their receipt has been, on several occasions, complained of by the addressees.

The answer given by the Telegraph Department has been, that each peon before leaving the telegraph office has four messages given him for delivery, and that if he can complete the delivery within half an hour he is considered to have done his work well.

It has also been suggested that people who are in a hurry for their messages might keep their own peons in attendance at the telegraph office. The Committee, however, would submit that the service should be effectually carried out from beginning to end by the Telegraph Department.

In September last the Committee of the Chamber were in communication with the Government of Bengal on the subject of greater facilities for telegraphic communication in the town and suburbs of Calcutta; and they suggested that as the telegraph office was at a somewhat inconvenient distance from places of business in the northern part of the city, a branch office in that locality, at some point that could be easily reached by merchants in Burra Bazaar, would be of advantage to both European and native merchants, by saving the time taken in sending messages to Dalhousie Square and *vice versâ*. The Committee are gratified to perceive that their suggestion has been adopted, and they are encouraged to point out that considerable further advantage and convenience would result if a branch were opened in the immediate neighbourhood of the office of the Chamber of Commerce, a locality well situated for service in connection with banking and commercial establishments north of the Custom House.

But if this extension of accommodation should not be thought judicious, then the Committee would urge that the staff of distributing peons be strengthened so as to ensure the most speedy delivery of mercantile messages, no peon being entrusted with more than one message at a time. The cost of such additional establishment would be comparatively unimportant when set against the improvement which it would effect in the efficiency of the telegraph service.

The Accounts in the Administration Report of the Telegraph Department for 1879-80 show larger profits than have ever been obtained before, and the Committee trust

that it may soon be found practicable to concede the reduction in the charge for inland messages which was applied for in my letter to the Government of India of 15th November. In the meantime, however, the Committee think they may fairly ask that the service be made as efficient as possible.

From Director-General of Telegraphs to Chamber.

No. 1114 T. *Simla the* 23*rd June* 1881.

With reference to your letter of the 9th instant, on the subject of the arrangements for delivering messages from the Calcutta Central Telegraph office, I have the honor to inform you that special attention has, of late, been given to improving that service. The messengers are paid according to the number of messages they deliver, which ensures their using despatch ; a strict order has been issued that no messenger is to take out messages to more than four addresses at one trip and that these must all be in the same direction.

2. Whenever the addressee enters the time of delivery on the receipt, any case of undue delay is invariably investigated and suitably noticed : but the public would greatly assist the Department in accelerating the delivery of messages were they more generally to enter the time of their receiving them in the space provided for the purpose on the delivery receipt.

3. I regret that it is incompatible with financial considerations that, when several telegrams have to be delivered

in the same line of route, as many messengers should be sent out as there are telegrams: unless the addressees detain the messenger, the delay to the second, third and fourth messages should be exceedingly small. There are about 500 telegrams delivered in Calcutta daily, and were the course you suggest adopted throughout the Department, I estimate that an increased expenditure, amounting to nearly a lakh and-a-half of rupees per annum, would be entailed.

4. As regards your suggestion that a branch office should be opened near the Chamber of Commerce, the Superintendent of Telegraphs, Bengal Division, will be asked to report on the subject. My present opinion is, that the re-transmission by telegraph from the central to the branch office would involve more delay than the delivery by messenger over so short a distance; but should it be decided to introduce a system of pneumatic tubes into Calcutta, the details of which scheme I am now considering, it would undoubtedly be desirable to establish a depôt in the vicinity referred to.

INSUFFICIENCY OF POWER OF HIGH COURT IN ADMIRALTY CASES.

The Committee have urged upon Government the necessity for an extension of the power of the High Court in Admiralty cases. As things now stand, shipowners and their creditors are alike exposed to serious inconvenience and loss, of which recent instances may be found in the cases of the "Brenhilda" and "South Carolina."

From Chamber to the Government of India.

Calcutta, 2nd November 1881.

The attention of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce has been directed to a very important Memorial addressed to His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General by Messrs. Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co.

These gentlemen were agents for the owners of the "Brenhilda," a British sailing ship which collided with the S. S. "Ava" in the Bay of Bengal on the 24th May 1879. The "Ava" sank; and at the suit of her owners the "Brenhilda" was arrested, and was kept in custody for upwards of two years.

This detention is stated to have occasioned to the "Brenhilda's" owners a loss of not less than £11,000, and though every proper effort was made to obtain an earlier release of the ship on bail, such endeavours were frustrated—1*stly*, because, in its Ordinary Original Jurisdiction, the High Court had no power to release, without admission of liability on the part of the applicant, and 2*ndly*, because the Statute 24 Vic., Cap. 10 (The Admiralty Court Act 1861) does not apply to India. Had it applied, it would then have been competent for the High Court, in its Admiralty Jurisdiction, to entertain a suit for limitation of liability under Sec. 514 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1854. But as it did not apply, it followed, upon the whole, that the owners of the "Brenhilda" could not obtain her release without admitting a liability to which it was not possible to fix a limit, nor without risking re-arrest of the vessel under other suits, and being thus compelled to successively deposit sums of money which, in the

aggregate, might have amounted to many times the value of the ship.

The Committee desire to unite with Messrs. Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co. in respectfully urging upon His Excellency the Governor-General in Council the need of legislation to obviate the recurrence of cases of hardship so serious as that which the Memorial sets forth.

The Committee submit that no time should be lost in obtaining the extension to India of the Admiralty Court Act 1861 (24 Vic., Cap. 10), and that a statutory right be conferred upon every shipowner to obtain the release of his vessel, without admitting liability, upon deposit of the maximum amount for which such shipowner could at the time be made liable under the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Amendment Act 1862 ; such deposit to be applied in satisfaction of all decrees against the vessel in respect of improper navigation, and the balance, if any, to be returned to the shipowner.

If it should appear that the Legislative Council of the Government of India is without power to effect this extension of the authority of the High Court, the Committee trust that the necessary representations will, as early as possible, be made to Her Majesty's Secretary of State.

It would at the same time be advisable to make it quite clear that the Vice-Admiralty Courts Act 1863 (26 Vic., Cap. 24) applies to India. Not only does it seem proper that the jurisdiction of the Vice-Admiralty Courts should be uniform throughout British Possessions, but circumstances have shewn how advantageous, to commercial interests here, such an amplification of the powers of our High Court would sometimes prove.

If an instance be necessary, reference may be made to the case of the "South Carolina," which, some 3 to 4 years ago, was practically abandoned in the Hooghly by a bankrupt owner; and for want of sufficient Vice-Admiralty Jurisdiction in our Courts had to remain over a year at moorings, incurring debts, and depreciating so heavily that when ultimately sold at the suit of the crew for wages, she did not realise sufficient to pay the claims against her for necessaries and repairs.

ILLEGAL TAXES ON OPIUM.

The attempted subjection of Indian opium to arbitrary and heavy taxation within the limits of the Treaty Ports in China, in excess of the import duty leviable under the Treaty of Tientsin, is fully illustrated in the following interesting communication from Messrs. Herton & Co., British Merchants, established at Pakoi.

The representation relative to the action of the Chinese officials was considered by the Committee of sufficient gravity to be promptly submitted to the Government of India; and it will be seen, from the reply to the Chamber's letter at foot, that it has been forwarded to the Secretary of State for India for transmission to Her Majesty's Foreign Office.

To the Chairman, Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta.

Pakhoi, China, 31*st July* 1881.

As we find the Chinese authorities, under one pretext and another, are establishing more and more offices for the collection of new taxes on Indian Opium in the Treaty Ports of Pakhoi and Hoihow, in the Province of Kwang-tung, to the great detriment of trade in this article, and as one of these new offices, called the *Haifang* (Defence Tax), has lately interfered with our legitimate business as regards opium, by molesting our customers, and even forcibly seizing our own opium from our own people, we have complained to Her Majesty's Consuls, both at Pakhoi and Hoihow, who have referred the whole question to Her Majesty's Minister at Peking.

Considering this question to be one which not only affects ourselves but which may also have a good deal of influence on trade in Indian opium generally, and as such may interest your Chamber, we avail ourselves of this opportunity to state, as briefly as possible, what has transpired.

We take our standpoint on the following ground, *viz.* :—Clause 1, Rule 5, Section 3, Articles of Trade with China, Tientsin Treaty, 1858, says—"Opium will henceforth pay 30 taels per picul import duty. The importer will sell it only at the port. It will be carried into the interior by Chinese only, and only as Chinese property."

It has been urged by the Chinese authorities that it was contemplated by the framers of the Chefoo Convention

that a change should be made, and that the Lekin (war tax) should be paid by the purchaser. It is, however, this very clause which has not been agreed to by Her Majesty's Government, and as the Chefoo Convention is not ratified it cannot be brought forward either in support of or against the action of the Chinese authorities.

The clause of the Tientsin Treaty above referred to is all we have to go by at present, and we submit that, in accordance with that clause, no tax whatever beyond the import tariff duty of 30 taels per picul (say about Rupees 115 per chest) can legally be levied within the limits of the treaty ports on foreign opium imported by a foreign vessel from a foreign country.

As foreign merchants, our limit in which to transact buisness in opium, that is, to *buy* or *sell* the article, is clearly defined, as being restricted to the Treaty ports: the clause permitting us to *sell* in the open port must reasonably permit purchasers to *buy* from us without molestation. If this is not the case, the portion of the clause permitting us to sell appears to us to be nugatory.

As matters now stand, however, although we have no doubt the Chinese authorities are well aware that they have no legal right to levy arbitrary duties within the limits of the treaty ports either on Indian opium or on any other foreign goods within the limits of the treaty ports, yet with their well known propensity for trying how far they can go with impunity, they have commenced first by establishing the *Lekin* (war tax) office in the ports, and imposing a tax of 23 taels per picul (say about Rs. 90 per chest). At the close of 1879, the *Haifang* office was

opened, and 22 taels (say, Rs. 69) per chest demanded; this was opposed by native merchants, who appealed to foreign merchants for assistance, and so far as British merchants at this port were concerned, H. M.'s Consul in reply to a communication from the Prefect clearly expressed his views, that in accordance with the treaty no other tax beyond the 30 taels per picul could be levied in the port on Indian opium imported by foreign vessels from a foreign country. This principle was admitted by the Prefect, and for sometime the business of British merchants was not interfered with directly, but the office was not removed.

In January last, the officials finding that they had gone along so far without being obliged to close their establishments in the ports, imposed another tax called *Kanli* (a tax on prepared opium) Taels 30.2.0.0 (say, about 94 Rupees) per chest. The actual collection of this tax commenced about May last, and, for their own convenience, they made it payable on raw opium, in the same way as the other imposition.

They now contemplate levying an additional tax of 150 taels (say, 506 Rupees) per chest, also to be collected in the open port, so that duties will then total in round figures as follows:—

Import Tariff duty per chest	...	Rs.	115
Lekin Tax	„	90
Haifang	„	69
Kan Li Tax	„	94
New tax proposed	„	506
Say, total per chest	„	874

of which we contend that only the equivalent of Rs. 115 per chest is legally leviable in the port.

The Chinese authorities are evidently of opinion that the time has now come for them to make a bold effort to override altogether the article of the Tientsin treaty above referred to, and no doubt with this object the *Haifang* office has lately placed soldiers around our premises, seized our customers just outside our door, and crowned their actions by seizing and maltreating one of our own men close to our house, and forcibly taking from him our own opium which he was carrying along. We had paid the legal tariff duty on this opium and it had not changed hands. The same things have been done at Hoihow.

Both at Pakhoi and Hoihow Her Majesty's Consul demanded the immediate restitution of our property, but the *Haifang* office persistently refused to give it up. That office (the *Haifang*), we may here explain, is carried on by a company of Chinese merchants, principally from Hongkong, who hold no official position, and to whom the Viceroy of Canton has farmed the privilege of collecting the *Haifang* and *Kanli* taxes for the sum of Taels 90,000, say, Rupees 303,750, per month, their area being the Province of Kwangtung.

The Prefect of this port, although in reply to the representation of H. M.'s Consul he again admitted the principle for which we contend, dared not compel the restitution of the opium, as the Haifang office immediately appealed to the Viceroy of Canton, to whom the Prefect is responsible for his action. The Viceroy in reply to H.

M.'s Consul said that he would cause enquiries to be made as to whether the opium seized had passed out of foreign possession or not, but we are in possession of proofs that at the same time he privately instructed the Prefect not to return the opium.

The Viceroy further stated to H. M.'s Consul that while opium in foreign possession could not be taxed beyond the tariff duty, yet the moment it passed into Chinese hands, *no matter whether in the treaty port or not*, it could be taxed in any way the Chinese authorities might please.

A copy of a document has come into our possession which clearly shows that the *Ts'ung Li Yamen* (Board of Foreign Affairs) at Peking, will, if possible, support the Viceroy.

If the principle which the Viceroy contends for be admitted, then the right granted to importers, under the treaty of Teintsin, to the whole area of the treaty ports in which to transact business, is at once done away with, and each individual merchant will be limited to his own individual premises, because the moment opium passes his door it will be seized. And should the Chinese officials succeed in their present attempts, legitimate business in Indian opium at the treaty ports will no longer be possible either for foreign or native merchants. Smuggling will no doubt be carried on to some extent, but Indian produce in this direction must eventually give way to the native article from Yunnan.

Lately there has been a greater demand for Indian opium in China, but this is explained by the fact that native merchants are anxious to import prior to the imposition of the new tax.

The well-meaning people connected with the Anti-Opium League may perhaps be of opinion that the imposition of these almost prohibitive duties shows the desire of the Chinese Government to put a stop to the traffic. This, however, is certainly not the case.

Prior to the signing of the treaty of Tientsin, the whole system of taxation (barring salt and land.) was in transit and arbitrary, being collected by insufficiently paid officials in the Provinces, who were dependent on what they could decently stop out of their receipts, and who besides had a lively notion of the taxableness of foreigners. The revenue had to filter through their hands, and somehow, before reaching Peking, had enabled the officials (salaried at ridiculous rates, which would not pay one of the several secretaries necessary in their Yamen) to acquire wealth.

The framers of the treaty of Tientsin were well aware of this, and it was precisely this system which they intended to alter. By the provisions of that treaty duties were thenceforward to be collected according to the prescribed tariff, and the result without deduction was to be sent to Peking.

The Peking Government, though now in receipt of a large and certain revenue (which is collected and remitted through the Foreign Inspectorate of Customs) instead of the quota which formerly reached it, has made no change in the salaries of its Provincial officers, who have still to keep up the same establishments, make the same presents, and remit the same quota of revenue to the Peking Government as before, and still manage to retire wealthy after their term of office has expired. To enable

them to do this, it is very plain that new sources of revenue must be found, and Indian opium is one of the articles fixed on as convenient to tax, more especially if it can be done in the treaty ports.

When a new tax is instituted, the right of collecting it is farmed to whoever will give the highest price. The farmers who go into the business, purely on speculation, come along armed with a proclamation from the Viceroy, and proceed straightway to make as much money as they can. They have no regard for the treaty or for the morality or immorality of the trade, or for anything else but their own pockets, and it is scarcely necessary to point out what must be the result under such a system; matters will in fact soon become worse than they were before the treaty of Tientsin was signed.

We contend that the meaning of the treaty of Tientsin is very clear, *viz., that all goods of foreign origin, opium included,* from a foreign port by a foreign vessel, shall be imported into, and sold in, the treaty ports of China, on payment of tariff duty *only.* And it is only when such goods *leave* the port for the interior, that they become subject to other regulations. The transit regulations are intended to provide for the introduction of piece-goods, cotton, yarn, &c., &c., into the interior, though the transit pass for such goods in the provinces of Kwangtung and Kwangsi is at present practically useless, in consequence of the officials persisting in imposing differential duties on certificated goods, and doing their utmost to throttle any attempt to convey the same to or from the interior. This affects Indian trade very materially, because if foreign goods could be conveyed into the interior on

payment of half the import tariff duty as provided for by the Tientsin treaty, the consumption of Indian cotton, yarns, &c., would increase enormously. As concerns opium, foreigners have by treaty given up all control of the article as soon as it leaves the port, *but not before*, and this very fact, combined with the circumstance that it was necessary to make a special clause in the Chefoo Convention, when it was contemplated that the purchaser of opium should pay Lekin, shows that under the treaty of Tientsin he (the purchaser) is *not* obliged to pay Lekin or any other tax beyond the import tariff duty in the treaty port.

In conclusion, we are glad to say that we have met with warm support from Mr. Consul Ford of Pakhoi and Mr. Consul Johnson of Hoihow, and we hope that Her Majesty's Minister at Peking may decide the question at issue in a manner favourable to foreign trade.

The reluctance with which Chinese officials in this direction carry out any of their treaty obligations, and their evident desire to utterly ignore the treaty on all possible occasions, in which it is but too much to be feared that they are supported, either directly or indirectly, by the Central Government at Peking, tends to show that any concession made to them at present would be most disastrous not only to trade in Indian opium, but to the advancement of business generally at the treaty ports. In representing this matter to your influential body, we shall be glad (should our views meet with your approval), if you will support us. If necessary, we shall have pleasure in furnishing you with further particulars.

We have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servants,

HERTON & CO.

From Chamber to Government of India.

Calcutta, 22nd September 1881.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have recently received from Messrs. Herton and Co., Merchants and Agents established at the treaty port of Pakoi in China, a representation relative to the action of the Chinese officials in endeavouring to levy on Indian opium various taxes in excess of the import duty of 30 taels per picul, as per Customs tariff authorised by the treaty of Tientsin of 1858.

A printed copy of that representation is herewith submitted for your information, and in placing it before you the Committee instruct me to express their hope that measures will be taken by Her Majesty's Government, both at Home and in this country, to maintain the provisions of the treaty in their integrity.

The position taken up by the Chinese authorities appears to be of sufficient gravity to demand the intervention of the British Government, in order to protect a trade which yields so large a proportion of the Indian revenue, and the security of which may be seriously imperilled if the proceedings of the Chinese authorities, in evasion of the treaty obligations, are not promptly and firmly arrested.

This subject which the Chamber of Commerce now venture to submit for the consideration of the Government of India has not been overlooked by the merchants of Calcutta and Bombay, who have memorialised His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General in Council,

praying that the system of taxation on Indian opium in China, as authorised by the treaty of Tientsin, be not departed from, as any departure from it, in the direction indicated in the memorial, will be calculated to injuriously affect the opium trade, and to sacrifice the revenue derived from it.

From Government of India to Chamber.

No. 3537, *Simla the* 15*th October* 1881.

I am directed by His Excellency the Governor-General in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated 22nd September last, submitting, with an expression of the views of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, a representation from Messrs. Herton and Co. of China, regarding the taxes levied on opium by the Chinese Government, and to inform you that a copy of the letter and its enclosure have been forwarded to the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India for transmission to Her Majesty's Foreign Office.

PETROLEUM ACT.

The draft rules for the landing, storage, and removal of petroleum, under the new act, having been first submitted for the opinions of the principal importers, the Committee communicated their views on the subject in the following reply to the reference made to them by the Government of Bengal.

From Chamber to Govt. of Bengal.

Calcutta, 6th September 1881.

I am directed by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to submit the following remarks on the draft rules under the Petroleum Act 8 of 1881, received with your demi-official of the 6th ultimo:—

Section 7, *Rule* 1.—It is proposed that the words "whether it is dangerous Pretroleum or not, and" be left out, because the master of a ship does not usually know more of the character of his cargo of oil than that it is of the quality represented by the various brands—such as "Daylight," "Devoe," "Comet," &c., and consequently it is desirable to omit the words quoted. The Committee see no objection to the substitution for the latter half of the rule the words "and shall produce a certificate of its quality."

Rule 5.—It is proposed that instead of drawing samples of oil on board the importing ship, an original tin be taken out of two or more separate cases as affording better security.

Rule 6.—Apart from the certificate furnished to him by the shipper of the oil, the master of a ship has no means of knowing what the quality is; and it is therefore proposed that the words, "both the master of the ship and" be omitted.

Rule 7.—It is proposed that the first sentence be altered as follows:—

"Petroleum shall be only landed between sun rise and sun set, and only in covered cargo boats, $\frac{\text{and}}{\text{or}}$ in open

cargo boats covered with tarpaulins, and or over landing stages from the ship to the shore." The limitation to conveyance in covered cargo boats might be found inconvenient, and open boats carefully protected would answer as well: and the provision as to landing stages is proposed in the event of arrangements being made to land oil direct from the ship without the employment of covered or open boats. This would accord more with the practice hitherto obtaining, and puts no unnecessary restrictions on the trade.

Rule 8.—It is proposed to modify this by alloting space as near the landing place as possible, for repairing, under police or other proper supervision, tins and cases before removal to godowns; as otherwise the loss from leakage may be considerable, and the proposed arrangement would prevent it.

Section 9, *Rule* 1.—As terraced or iron roofed godowns are not easily obtainable in localities for storing petroleum, and as the roofs of godowns are not usually all *pucka*, it is proposed that in the fourth line the wording should be "except the doors and necessary beams and burgahs in the roof."

Rule 9, 12*th line*.—Licenses to possess petroleum—It is proposed to add the words "other than dangerous." The scale of fees is considered excessive relatively to the quantities, and the following amendments are proposed:—

When the quantity to be stored does not exceed 50,000 gallons, or one cargo... Rs. 50

Exceeding 50,000 gallons .. .. „ 100

the provision "for every additional 10,000 gallons" being expunged.

Rule 12.—It is proposed to extend the time for executing repairs from one week to two weeks from the date of receipt of notice, and to alter the rule accordingly.

Rule 15.—The power given to a licensing officer to require the licensee to remove the petroleum is considered to be too great, and it is proposed that an appeal, from his decision in such case, to the Government of Bengal should be provided.

Rule 16.—It is proposed to substitute the words "three months" instead of "one month."

It is presumed that the conditions at back of form of License A do not refer to dangerous petroleum, but to the petroleum of commerce, and that the conditions at back of form B refer to dangerous petroleum, and not to the petroleum of commerce. If so, this should be stated on the forms.

With the amendments now submitted, the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce think the rules would be found practically workable in the ordinary course of trade.

COMMUNICATION WITH FALSE POINT.

It was represented to the Committee that it might be practicable to connect False Point Light House by Telephone wire with Hookey Tollah Post Office on Dodswell Island, thus enabling vessels, by signals to and from the Light House, to communicate with and receive orders

from Calcutta much sooner than is at present possible, the quickest means of communication being now at Saugor.

The Committee are pleased that the Lieutenant-Governor has sanctioned their proposal, provided the arrangement suggested be found suitable.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 15th June 1881.

It has been represented to the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce that it would be a very great advantage to ships and steamers if their movements could be reported, or orders given, from the Light House at False Point; and I am accordingly directed to send you the accompanying chart of False Point harbour, and to give the following explanation of what is wanted, in the hope that His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor will be pleased to take such action in the matter as he may think desirable.

At present, as the Committee are informed, Jamboo is connected by telegraph wire with Calcutta *viâ* Cuttack, and recently a telephone wire has been erected between Jamboo and Hookey Tollah post-office on Dowdeswell Island. The wire passes in somewhat the direction indicated in red ink, and comes within 450 yards of the Light House. Sailing vessels during a great part of the year, and steamers at all times, could come within three miles of the Light House with safety, and if it were connected with the present telephone wire, they could then be reported to

Calcutta much earlier than now, the distance to Saugor, at present the nearest point of communication with Calcutta, being nearly 130 miles, whilst to the Eastern Channel Light Ship, where instructions sometimes await them, the distance is about 90 miles.

Orders to proceed to such outports as Chittagong could be given from this Light House, or instructions could be sent to proceed to False Point anchorage, and await orders sent to Hookey Tollah from Calcutta.

The advantages of earlier information as to the approach of vessels inward bound, and the great saving in time, which might often be effected by early instructions when the destination is other than Calcutta, would be very great, and the expenditure in cost of plant and establishment would probably be so moderate, that the Committee trust His Honor may look with favor on the proposal, and the Telegraph Department may be induced to take it up. In case it should be carried out, instructions would of course have to be given from the Marine Survey Department as to the safety of the route and the seasons of the year when such near approach to the sands might be dangerous. At present, it is said, that many vessels do, in the monsoon months, come within signalling distance of the Light House.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.

No. 2330 *M.P.I. dated Calcutta, 2nd Nov.* 1881.

With reference to your letter dated the 15th June last to the Secretary to this Government in the General Department, I am directed to inform you that the Lieuteuant-

Governor has sanctioned the construction of a telegraph line from the False Point Light House to Hookey Tollah to be worked by telephone, if that arrangement is found to be suitable.

PROPOSED MERCANTILE EXCHANGE.

The Committee and the members of the Chamber are much indebted to Mr. H. Reinhold for his disinterested advocacy of this scheme. The Lieutenant-Governor has not yet replied to the reference made to him on the subject. The existence of a building, such as Mr. Reinhold's scheme contemplates, would, besides benefiting merchants, be an ornament to the city, and is worthy of Government support on that ground. If the proposed site can be had on easy terms, and the project meets with the support of members of the Chamber, there should not be much difficulty in carrying it out.

From Chamber to the Private Secretary to the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor.

Calcutta, 14th September 1881.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce direct me to request you will be so good as to place the accompanying papers before the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor.

The subject submitted for His Honor's consideration is a proposal, emanating from Mr. H. Reinhold, a member of the Chamber, for the establishment of a Mercantile Exchange.

The scheme has been circulated for the views of the members of the Chamber, and their recorded minutes contain an expression of opinion generally in favour of it: but as the success of the project depends mainly on assistance being given by Government in securing the site suggested for the building, the Committee venture to inquire, with reference to propositions 1, 2, 3 and 6 in Mr. Reinhold's letter of the 5th instant—

1*st.* If the Land Acquisition Act can be put in force in this case?

2*nd.* Is it in the power of the Lieutenant-Governor to promote the object in view by a loan, to the extent, and on the conditions stated in proposition 2?

3*rd.* Would His Honor be inclined to sanction the proposed association of two members of the Port Commission with the executive administration of the Exchange, in order to secure the stability and permanency of the local Committee of management?

4*th.* Is this, in the opinion of His Honor, a case in which the privilege of exemption from Government and Municipal taxation can be conceded?

The Committee agree with Mr. Reinhold in thinking that the proposed Exchange would serve a very useful public purpose, and might be made an ornament to the city. They entertain doubts, however, as to the amount

of support such an Institution would, in the first instance, receive, owing to the conditions under which business is carried on in Calcutta differing so much from those which obtain in European towns of the same commercial standing. The fluctuating character of the mercantile community is a serious drawback to the carrying out of this or any similar undertaking, and forms the main ground on which the Committee desire an indication of the amount and kind of support His Honor might think it would be right for Government to give to the project under discussion. The Committee believe that, were the site secured in the way Mr. Reinhold proposes, it would be quite practicable to raise money for the buildings, and to plan these so as to make the venture a financial success. The main difficulty is the initial one regarding the site; and, as regards this point, I am desired to say that my Committee gather from a statement reported to have been made by the Chairman of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, at a recent meeting of that body, that the Government of Bombay are willing to grant a free site on the Esplanade for the erection in Bombay of an Institution similar to that which it is now proposed to build here.

From H. Reinhold, Esq., to Chamber.

Calcutta, 5th September 1881.

The Committee of the Chamber has been good enough to favor me with a perusal of the papers circulated amongst the Members in relation to the proposed Exchange, from which I gather that the majority of members are in

favor of such an institution, whilst another section gives a modified approval, but only one firm is absolutely against it.

The business of European houses in Calcutta is of so multifarious a character and distributes itself chiefly among banking establishments, shipping agencies, export and import houses and agents for numerous local industries, that this fact alone will account, to some extent, for the variety of opinions expressed ; however, as far as banking, shipping, export business, and agency houses for local industries are concerned, the business is almost exclusively carried on through European intermediates or brokers, and in this respect the condition of our local transactions has been greatly altered during the last 10 to 15 years, compared with the system obtaining 20—25 years ago, when a great deal of such business was conducted through native banians and brokers. The extensive use made of telegraphic communication with Europe creates daily changes ; it not only enhances the general activity, but causes a much greater demand upon the time allowed for daily work, and it is in this respect necessary that, for a given time during the day, business affairs and business men should be concentrated at a place adapted and suitable for carrying on negotiations and the settlement of their transactions.

I need not refer to the first section who have expressed their approval ; nor do I think it necessary to allude further to the minority against it ; but those who have indicated a modified approval have, in many instances, expressed a doubt whether any assistance would be accorded to such an institution by the local Government. I beg to state

that, personally, I feel satisfied that such patronage and support will be granted, and I base this assurance upon the many recent acts and utterances of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor for the interest and welfare of this port and its commercial interest; at the same time I think it is the duty of the mercantile community to place, in the first instance, their veiws before the Government in a reasonable and clearly defined shape, before they express a doubt upon the ulterior result.

At the request of your Committee I will state my own views, and recapitulate the points upon which I consider the aid of the local Government, its patronage and support, necessary for the future success of such an institution:—

1. To obtain the site indicated in my previous letter, and to acquire the land under the Land Acquisition Act for a public purpose.

2. To pay for such land a fixed monthly rent hereafter in perpetuity to the superior landlord, say, not exceeding Rs. 1,000 per month, and to compensate the proprietor for the balance by the payment of a bonus-sum,—of this latter the Government to grant a sum not exceeding one lakh of rupees, free of interest, as a loan, provided the merchants of Calcutta subscribe a similar amount.

3. That the money required for building the Exchange be raised upon debentures, and the Government to grant permission that two members of the Port Commission be associated with the Committee to act as trustees for such debentures; the debentures interest to be borne by current revenue from the Exchange, besides an annual sum placed apart for reduction of the debenture debt.

4. That the mercantile subscribers have the privilege to receive shares for the amount subscribed towards the acquisition of the site, with deferred proprietory rights, as soon as the Government grant is repaid to Government.

5. That the administration of the building be placed in the hands of a Special Committee, consisting of two of the Port Commissioners, besides the President or Vice-President of the Chamber of Commerce (if not acting as Port Commissioner,) to which hereafter shall be joined two members elected by the mercantile subscribers, being neither of the Port Commission nor holding either the office of President or Vice-President; it would also be desirable to have one of the representatives of the local banks added.

6. That as regards local taxes and rates, this building should be treated as a place built and sanctioned for public purposes, and to have all the privileges of similar institutions as far as Government and municipal rates and taxes are concerned.

Touching the points enumerated above, I presume there will be no special difficulty in getting the Land Acquisition Act extended for the benefit of this institution if the public purpose is shown.

As regards 2, it is, in the first instance, necessary not to burthen the future with a high permanent monthly rent; and the amount of bonus to be paid depends naturally upon the nett rental obtained during the last three years to compensate the proprietor.

I am credibly informed that such rent has not exceeded Rs. 20,000 per annum, though I have no proof to adduce.

I will assume this to be about correct; to compensate for this amount, there will be then

12 months rent at 1,000 Rs. per mensum ...	Rs.	12,000
and a sum required, say Rs. 2,00,000 at 4 per cent. in Government Paper ...	„	8,000
	Rs.	20,000

to furnish the equivalent. If the proprietor could be induced to accept, instead of Government-paper, a part of the debenture-issue, it would facilitate matters still more.

Touching the repayment of the Government grant of say one lakh, free of interest, for a given number of years, my view is that the holders of the shares with deferred proprietory rights will come forward, if the debenture debt gets annually diminished, to subscribe this sum for repayment to the Government in order to improve their own position, which, after a time, must become a valuable investment.

The building fund to be raised upon debentures cannot be approximately fixed until a properly worked-out plan of the building allows of a careful estimate, but if, as I conceive, such a building should be constructed of good workmanship and carefully executed, is to last for future generations, it is quite equitable and proper that the redemption of such debentures should be spread over a given number of years, and future generations thus bear part of the burthen for which they gain all the advantages. I would therefore state in explanation of para. 3 that in addition to the annually payable debentures interest, a sum of not less than Rs. 5,000 and not more than Rs. 10,000 should be set

apart for amortization of the debenture debt to commence three years after the completion of the building.

In para. 4, I have urged that special privilege be accorded the mercantile subscribers of the fund, partly because I think it essential to give them a special interest in this institution, and further with the view of retaining its special character as a purely commercial public building, which eventually is to stand upon its own footing to emulate and increase the prosperity of this city. It will be easily seen that such a building should neither be dependent upon the municipality nor any single proprietor; its character should be safeguarded by a special Act or Charter from Government.

In the next para. 5, relating to the Committee of administration, owing to the fluctuating mercantile community, that some special body, such as we have under the recently created Port-trust, should be associated with it to afford stability and trustworthiness to the issue of debentures; as the members of the Port Commision are collected by the Government, it is of course necessary to get the sanction of the Government to allow at least two of its members to be permanently associated with the debenture-trust; however to retain at the same time to this institution its general purpose, I should advocate that either one or two of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce be ex-officio members of the administration of exchange in addition to two members chosen by the general subscribers and proprietors. These are of course merely suggestions, which, if more closely considered, may probably require modifications.

If the general character is acknowledged as one of public utility and for the extension of our commercial prosperity, which in its turn benefits all classes not only of this city but the country at large, I trust the Government will accord it the privilege of being freed from local taxes and burthens, because the Government itself has an interest not to overweight this institution if it is to fulfil its ordinary obligations.

In my former letter I gave only a short outline of the sources of income and expenditure, but from the foregoing it will be clear that the expenditure will necessarily be larger, because we have already dealt with an

Annual payment of rent, say	...	Rs.	22,000
Besides Debenture interest, say	...	„	20,000
And Debenture redemption, 5,000 to...		„	10,000
To which must be added the other items enumerated about	...	„	10,000
Giving a total estimate of about	...	Rs.	60,000

On the other hand, I have already pointed out to your Committee how the income might be considerably increased, not only from the increased number of offices, but also of a better rental under the outer colonnades, but also from subscribers and by letting the upper rooms for such commercial purposes, like sale-rooms for Tea (now carried on in the Metcalfe Hall), or special rooms to various Associations, such as the Tea Planters' Association, Mill Owners' Association, (though not in existence at present, likely to be of necessity, as this industry is rapidly increasing) and various others. I need not repeat that

such institutions like the Chamber of Commerce and a Central Telephone Office would naturally find it to their own advantage to appropriate or occupy a part of this building. Finally, I would impress upon your Committee the urgency of this matter, because I understand that some scheme is at present before the proprietor of the existing building and site for converting it to other purposes.

Moreover, I trust your Committee will be in accord with my views if I venture to express my conviction that it would be a compliment to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, in return for the encouragement given but recently to another deputation, if this scheme could soon obtain tangible shape, and afford us the gratification to see the foundation laid by him during the incumbency of his present high office, and have his name associated with this building in grateful remembrance for future generations.

Apologising for the length of this letter, I beg of you to assure the Committee of my profound respect for the encouragement accorded to me in this matter.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A EUROPEAN GENERAL HOSPITAL AT DARJEELING.

The reasons which induced the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal to propose and carry out a scheme for a European General Hospital at Darjeeling, and the proceedings of a Committee appointed by His Honor to consider and report upon the subject, are fully recorded in the following official papers.

The Committee of the Chamber having been requested to ascertain to what extent assistance might be given by the Chamber, they submitted the reference to members, and the result is acknowledged in the Resolution which closes this portion of the Report.

Calcutta the 20th June 1881.

RESOLUTION.

In the note which is appended to this Resolution, the Lieutenant-Governor stated his reasons for thinking that Government should take measures to provide a European Hospital at Darjeeling for the reception of patients and convalescents from the plains, and appointed a Committee* to examine the subject, and to submit proposals for carrying the scheme into effect. The Lieutenant-Governor expressed his willingness to make a grant from Provincial Services of Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 60,000 for the establishment of such a hospital as would afford accommodation to invalids from all parts of the Lower Provinces.

* Hon'ble A. Mackenzie, *President.*
Colonel Trevor, R. E.
The Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling.
Mr. Martin, Superintending Engineer.
Dr. Birch, Civil Surgeon.
Mr. Christie, Executive Engineer.

2. The Committee, after careful consideration of the different sites available, recommend that the site of the Booteah School should be adopted. They have considered a rough plan of a two-storied hospital to accommodate 16 first-class, 20 second-class, and 20 third-class patients, at an estimated cost of about Rs. 52,000, and they propose that the plans and estimates should be completed by the

Public Works Department for submission to the Lieutenant-Governor. They are of opinion that little difficulty would be found in raising public subscriptions to provide for the equipment of the hospital and the maintenance of the poorer classes of patients, and they recommend that measures should be taken to ascertain what assistance may be expected from the public.

3. The Lieutenant-Governor approves the suggestions put forward in the Committee's report. The Public Works Department will be requested to take measures at once to level the Booteah School site, demolishing the old buildings and cutting down the hill so as to secure sufficient space for a substantial structure of the dimensions proposed. Plans and estimates of the work should be prepared with as little delay as possible, and as soon as they have been approved by the Lieutenant-Governor, a special grant will be made of the amount required for the construction of the building. Meanwhile a grant of Rs. 2,000 is sanctioned to admit of the Police Hospital being at once adapted for the reception of European patients, so that accommodation may be available during the current season.

4. The Commissioner of the Division will be desired to submit suggestions regarding the constitution of the governing body of the new institution. It is necessary that a Committee should at once be formed with authority to receive subscriptions. The Committee will also have to consider various questions connected with the administration of the hospital and to submit, for the approval of Government, a scheme for its general management. As recommended in paragraph 8 of the Committee's report,

the Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, the Trades' Association, and the Agents of the East Indian and Eastern Bengal Railways, will be invited to say to what extent the Committee may expect donations for furniture now, and subscriptions for other purposes hereafter. The Surgeon-General will be requested to ascertain to what extent advantage would probably be taken of the hospital by the different classes of patients, and to offer suggestions regarding the system under which the officers in charge of the metropolitan hospitals should be authorized to transfer patients to the Darjeeling Hospital.

By order of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal,

COLMAN MACAULAY,
Offg Secy. to the Government of Bengal.

NOTE.

Now that the Tramway has been brought into Darjeeling, and that the sanitarium is placed in direct and easy communication with Calcutta and with most of the civil stations of Bengal, and now that tea-planters from the unhealthy Dooars and the Terai can reach this station easily and without exposure in a few hours, the question of providing a good, well organized, European hospital, for the comfortable reception of patients and convalescents from the plains, forces itself upon the consideration of Government.

I have already received representations regarding hospital accommodation for sick persons and convalescents connected with the Eastern Bengal Railway, the Northern Bengal Railway, and the Darjeeling Tramway; and it

appears that, if nothing else be done, some arrangement must at once be made in communication with the Managers of those lines for supplying a great and growing need of this sort. But as Darjeeling increases—and it is now increasing daily—we shall have to provide hospital accommodation for the permanent residents of the station and district. There are the tea-planters and their assistants scattered about all over the district, some of them placed in very unhealthy situations. Cases in which young men are brought in suffering from fever of a severe type for medical attendance are very common, and a difficulty is frequently found in providing them with accommodation during their illness. The hotels and boarding-houses are generally full, and a sick person is not always a welcome inmate in a public establishment of that sort; and it is feared that many useful men have lost their lives in the Dooars and the Terai, who would at once have come up for treatment if a comfortable hospital existed for their reception. Then, again, there are many cases of persons residing in outlying plantations, who desire attendance during their confinement, who can only obtain it at an enormous expense, altogether beyond their means, and who are not within reach of the Civil Surgeon, and cases are not unknown in which it has been found impossible to procure accommodation for such cases here on any terms.

But besides these there are frequent cases in the mofussil stations of persons pulled down after severe sickness or suffering from obstinate disease, who are unable to take the change to sea which richer persons could afford, but for whom a change and careful medical attendance are

absolutely necessary. There are also persons who could undergo operations in the cool climate of the hills, which they could not bear in the heat of the plains. Lastly, there are patients convalescing in the Calcutta hospitals, to whom a change to a convalescent ward in Darjeeling would be of the utmost importance.

It therefore seems to me that as a European hospital has to to built, we should not keep in mind only the requirements of Darjeeling, but of the province generally. It will in the long run be a saving to Government if a number of its servants can be sent up here for a few weeks' treatment in a European climate, instead of having to take leave to Europe, or to linger on in a condition of inefficiency from ill-health at stations in the plains.

The experiment of paying wards for first-class patients has been tried on a small scale in Darjeeling, as also in Calcutta, and with the greatest promise of success.

I think that the best plan of dealing with the matter will be by appointing a Committee to consider the whole subject—the site, the classes and quantity of accommodation, the rate of charges, the mode of admission, &c., &c.

I accordingly appoint the following gentlemen to be members of a Committee for this purpose :—

The Hon'ble A. Mackenzie, *President.*

Colonel Trevor.

The Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling.

Mr. Martin.

Dr. Birch.

Mr. Christie.

They should consult the present Hospital Committee, who have already given the subject their attention.

There are several sites which suggest themselves—

1. Vale Pleasant, which could at once be made available for the purpose. It has every advantage except that the houses are entirely out of repair. It has a bright look out, and is near the Mall. There are three houses; one has seven rooms with ample bath-room accommodation, which could be made into a hospital for paying-patients of the first-class.

Then there is one large ward in a separate building which would do for patients of the third-class, who would be inmates of a general ward. It is airy, light, and has a teak-boarded floor; it would hold probably 14 or 16 beds at least. There is a row of little separate rooms attached to this, which would be very comfortable for second-class patients.

And there is the Retreat, a very comfortable four-roomed cottage, which would be available for special cases requiring quiet, such as midwifery, or operations.

This site, with the buildings is, I believe, valued at Rs. 10,000, and I should be glad to transfer it to the Hospital Committee, and to make a grant towards its repair. Some of the buildings would require a new roofing, and a good deal is required in the way of repairs. Proper servants' quarters are required, and a room for the hospital assistant would also be necessary. But after inspecting the buildings, I am afraid that they are so much out of repair, that practically they would have to be re-built; and if this is

to be done, the money will be better spent in constructing an entirely new hospital on the most improved principle than in repairing and adapting old buildings—never a satisfactory process.

2. Then there is the Booteah School site. A magnificent site might be secured by pulling down the old Post Office, now used as a Booteah School, and cutting down the hill 12 or 14 feet. Upon this site a really good two-storied hospital might be constructed, capable of providing between 50 and 60 beds. Of these, about 15 or 16 probably should be separate rooms for Government officers and other first-class patients, 20 might be for second-class, and 20 for third-class patients.

3 Then there is the site at the back, or at the south, of the Bengal Office; but this is perhaps bringing the hospital too much into the station.

4. There is a Government site at Lowland's Place; but this is perhaps too far down the hill, and is not very accessible; otherwise it is a very fine site.

I have indicated above the various classes which would probably have to be accommodated. I should say that—

First-class patients should pay Rs. 2 a day, making their own arrangement for diet.

Second-class patients should be men, and the families of men, drawing, say, less than Rs. 300 a month in salary, or an equivalent income from other sources. The charge for them might be Rs. 3 a day including diet. They should have a ward to themselves, or rather two wards—one for males, the other for females.

Third-class patients should be men of official or other incomes of less than Rs. 100 a month. They should pay probably Re. 1-4 a day, including diet, on the scale of the General Hospital. They must be inmates of the general ward set apart for their sex.

When patients of the third-class are servants of a State or Guaranteed Railway, or public Company, or of a public department, they should be received only on a guarantee that their cost at the fixed rate per diem will be paid or recovered by their employers or the head of the department, who will make arrangements for recovering it when necessary from the patient. Where convalescents of the third-class are sent up from Calcutta by the public hospitals, the hospitals must be responsible for their fees here.

I leave, however, the rate of fee to be settled by the Committee, but have merely suggested these rates for their guidance.

It seems to me to be of great importance to give the scheme an *immediate* trial, and I am therefore willing to make a grant of Rs. 2,000, which should enable the Hospital Committee to adapt the whole of the Police Hospital at once for the reception of European patients. The Executive Engineer could arrange for accommodating the few police patients there are elsewhere.

A proper establishment would have to be provided and eventually paid for by the Hospital Committee. I think a good English nurse or matron essential. A trustworthy woman could probably be induced to take the place in

this climate on very favourable terms. If no one is available locally, the Ladies' Committee at Calcutta might find some one suited to the place. I do not wish the hospital to be a charity hospital. It should pay its expenses, the building having been once provided and equipped. I am disposed to give a grant from Provincial Services of Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 60,000 for the purpose of establishing the hospital, provided such a hospital is erected as shall afford accommodation to invalids from all parts of the Lower Provinces. For a merely local hospital, or for accommodation for the railway servants? I could not sanction more than half the amount. I gather from the Civil Surgeon that he thinks a considerable sum might be raised from subscription for such a useful purpose as this. The fees should be so fixed that they afford a reasonable prospect of the hospital covering its expenses. Five or six first-class, five second-class, and twelve or fourteen third-class, patients ought to cover every expense.

ASHLEY EDEN.

The 11th June 1881.

REPORT.

The Committee appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor's note of the 11th June, to consider the question of establishing a European General Hospital at Darjeeling, met at the Bengal Office at 10 A. M. on the 15th June.

PRESENT:

All the Members.

1. The Committee, accepting as beyond controversy the considerations put forward by the Lieutenant-Governor

in favour of the establishment of a European Hospital at Darjeeling, on the largest scale suggested in His Honor's note, proceeded to consider first the question of sites.

2. They were unanimously of opinion that Vale Pleasant was not a desirable site for a hospital. Not only were the buildings unsuitable and dilapidated, but the ground space was far too limited. Moreover, experience had shown that there was serious risk of damage to any buildings there from landslips on the hill above.

3. The site in the Bengal Office grounds was also considered too small; and it was moreover suggested that Government would in time require the ground for offices. Besides which, to place a hospital so close to the Mall, and the most frequented roads of the station, was not advisable.

4. Lowland's Place was admitted to be a fine site, but the Executive Engineer pointed out that it was at present the only brickfield available to Government. It was very desirable to work out the bed of clay now exposed there before putting any buildings on the land. It would afterwards form a fine building site. Dr. Birch objected to the site as too far away from the centre of the station, and as less open than the Bhootea School site.

5. On the whole, the Committee had no doubt that by far the best site was, that put forward as No. 2 in the Lieutenant-Governor's note, *i.e.*, on the top of the Bhootea School hill. To cut the hill down 14 feet would, Mr. Christie thought, cost only from Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 1,500, and would give a ground area of upwards of 200 × 100 feet. To cut it down 20 feet, at a cost of about Rs. 2,000, would give a still larger area.

6. The Committee resolved to recommend that the old buildings now on the top of the hill should be at once demolished, the teachers who occupy them being moved into Christina Villa, an empty house belonging to Government, just below the school, and that the Executive Engineer should be authorized by the Public Works Department to commence the levelling of the site proposed. Even were the hospital not to be built eventually, Government would secure by this operation a vastly improved property.

7. Mr. Martin laid before the Committee a rough plan of a two-storied hospital, settled by him in communication with Dr. Birch, providing accommodation for—

16 1st-class patients,
20 2nd-class ,,
20 3rd-class ,,
} half being males and half females, and estimated to cost about Rs. 52,000.

The Committee considered the plan, and approved it with certain minor modifications.

They resolved to recommend that Mr. Martin should be authorized to complete the plans for a building of the size and description shown, but modified, if necessary, to suit the shape of the plateau as produced by cutting down the hill top, and to work out regular estimates for the orders of the Lieutenant-Governor in the Public Works Department.

8. The Committee remarked that the grant offered by Government would not do much more than meet the cost of levelling the site and erecting the proposed buildings. They thought, however, that little difficulty would be found in raising by public subscription money enough to furnish the hospital completely. They also thought it advisable to secure annual subscriptions sufficient to en-

able the managing body of the hospital to make provision hereafter for even a poorer class of patients than those mentioned in the Lieutenant-Governor's note; or such subscriptions might be applied in paying the railway fares and providing warm clothing and other comforts for patients who could not afford such for themselves. The Committee resolved to recommend that Government, in the Medical Department, should at once make public the Lieutenant-Governor's note and the Committee's proposals, and invite the Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, the Trade's Association, the Managing Boards or Agents of the East Indian Railway, the Eastern Bengal Railway, and other like bodies, to say to what extent the Committee might expect donations for furniture now, and subscriptions for other purposes hereafter. It might also be found that some of the funds at the disposal of the hospital authorities in Calcutta could be devoted to paying the expenses of poor convalescents sent up from medical institutions at the Presidency. Enquiry might, at the same time, be made as to the extent to which advantage would probably be taken of the hospital by the different classes of patients. On this point the leading medical officers in Calcutta and the larger mofussil stations might be able to give useful information.

9. The Committee did not consider that enquiries such as those suggested above need delay the putting in hand of the work of building. They had no doubt that a hospital of the size suggested would always have a sufficient number of patients to make it self-supporting. They looked forward rather to its being possible, with the aid of public subscriptions, to extend the benefits proposed

to a poorer class, and especially to the children of the Free and other Charitable Schools in Calcutta. In time the whole School Hill might be covered with buildings devoted to such uses, the Bhootea School being moved elsewhere.

10. The Committee thought that it was premature at present to attempt to settle the scale of charges. Generally speaking, the Lieutenant-Governor's suggestions seemed reasonable, but this was a point that could be settled hereafter before the hospital was opened, and when it had been decided how its governing body should be composed.

11. The Committee also did not consider it necessary at present to place themselves in communication with the present Hospital Committee, Dr. Birch having informed them that that body was already taking steps for giving effect to the Lieutenant-Governor's wishes regarding the extension of the present European Hospital, and Dr. Birch himself being in possession of all the information that could be contributed by the Hospital Committee.

12. The Committee observed that the Lieutenant-Governor's note did not appoint them to be the governing body of the proposed hospital. They thought that the mode of admission into the hospital would best be determined by rules to be drawn up by such governing body, and approved by Government hereafter. It would probably only be necessary to provide that, except in emergent cases, applications for admission should be submitted to the governing body for orders, and that that

body, or the medical officer subject to their control, should have power to terminate the residence of any patient.

A. MACKENZIE,
President.

Dajeeling the 29th July 1881.

RESOLUTION.

Read—

The Resolution recorded by the Lieutenant-Governor on the 20th May 1881, on the subject of the establishment of a European hospital at Darjeeling, for the reception of patients and convalescents from the plains.

Read also—

Letter No. 392Jct., dated the 14th instant, from the Commissioner of the Rajshahye and Cooch Behar Division, submitting proposals for the constitution of the governing body of the new hospital.

The Lieutenant-Governor, finding that the Darjeeling European Hospital promises to be an institution of provincial importance, is of opinion that the governing body must be constituted upon a broader basis than was originally contemplated. Sir Ashley Eden has therefore been pleased to appoint the undermentioned gentlemen to be members of the permanent Committee to be entrusted with the administration of the hospital :—

The Senior Secretary to the Government of Bengal, present at Darjeeling	*President.*	*Ex-officio.*
The Commissioner of the Rajshahye and Cooch Behar Division ...	*Vice-President.*	
The Secretary to the Government of Bengal, in the Public Works Department		
The Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling		
Mr. E. J. MARTIN, Government Architect	*Members.*	
MAJOR FRANKLIN PRESTAGE, Agent, Eastern Bengal Railway...		
Mr. D. MURRAY, Manager, Soom Tea Estate		
„ T. B CURTIS, Manager, Tukvar Estate		
„ G. W. CHRISTISON, Manager, Lebong Tea Estate		
The Civil Surgeon of Darjeeling ..	*Member (ex-officio) and Secretary.*	

Any three members of the Committee present at a meeting will form a quorum.

2. It was pointed out by the Committee of gentlemen appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor, in the first instance, to consider the question of establishing the hospital, that the grant offered by Government would not meet much more than the cost of levelling the site selected, and constructing the proposed buildings; and they, therefore, recommended that the Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, the Trades' Association, the Managing Boards or Agents of the East Indian Railway, the Eastern Bengal Railway, and other like bodies, should be invited to state the extent to which the Committee might expect donations for furniture now and subscriptions for other purposes hereafter. This recommendation has been acted upon, and the result has been very gratifying to the Lieutenant-Governor. The Chamber of Commerce have circulated the papers fur-

	Donation. Rs.
* Messrs. Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co.	250
,, Jardine, Skinner & Co....	250
,, Hoare, Miller & Co. ...	250
,, Lloyd & Co.	500
,, Octavius Steel & Co. ...	250
,, Begg, Dunlop & Co. ...	250
,, Macneill & Co.	250
,, Bird & Co.	250
,, J. Thomas & Co. ...	250
,, Williamson, Magor & Co.	250
,, William Moran & Co. ...	250
,, Schoene, Kilburn & Co.	250
Total ...	3,250

nished them to the Tea Agency firms more particularly intersted in Darjeeling and adjoining districts, and have submitted a list of donations,* amounting to Rs. 3,250. The Agent, Eastern Bengal Railway Company, has intimated that the matter has been submitted to the Board of Directors of the Company with the necessary recommendation, and the Maharaj Koomar of Burdwan has placed at the Lieutenant-Governor's disposal the very liberal sum of Rs. 10,000 towards the cost of establishing the hospital.

3. The Lieutenant-Governor authorizes the Governing Committee now appointed to receive these and any other donations or subscriptions that may be made, and they are requested to make the necessary arrangements for the purchase of furniture for the hospital. The Lieutenant-Governor thinks that the Committee will probably be able to obtain such furniture as good brass or iron bedsteads, with mattresses, &c., more cheaply from a wholesale firm in England than by purchase in this country; and they may, if necessary, apply to Government for an advance of money to enable them to make timely arrangements for their purchase.

4. The Lieutenant-Governor is of opinion that, on the completion of the building for the hospital, the Committee should cause a marble slab to be placed in the hall of the building, acknowledging the gift made by the Maharaj

Koomar of Burdwan, and other similar donations. One of the wards should also be named after the Maharaj Koomar.

ORDERS.—Ordered that a copy of this Resolution, with copies of connected papers be forwarded to each gentleman appointed to be a Member of the Governing Committee for his information and guidance.

Ordered also that copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce, with a request that he will be so good as to convey to the Chamber an expression of the Lieutenant-Governor's thanks for the interest they have evinced in the matter.

Ordered also that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Maharaj Koomar of Burdwan, for his information, with a letter conveying the thanks of the Lieutenant-Governor, in suitable terms, for the gift made by him.

Ordered also that this Resolution be published in the *Calcutta Gazette.*

By order of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal,

A. MACKENZIE,

Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

LONDON CORN TRADE ASSOCIATION.

The following letter and Resolution were communicated to the members of the Chamber by circular, dated the 10th June last, and are placed on record in this Report for reference.

22, LEADENHALL STREET,

London, E. C., May 5th, 1881.

DEAR SIR,

I beg to call your attention to the following Resolution, which was passed by the Executive Committee at their Meeting on the 3rd instant.

I am, your obedient servant,

J. F. H. WOODWARD,

Secretary.

RESOLVED—

"That the Secretary be instructed to write to the importing merchants of East Indian grain, as also to the Chambers of Commerce in Calcutta and Bombay, that in consequence of the owners of a few chartered steamers having refused to abide by the Dock rates of 1877, respecting the discharge in London of East Indian grain, which Dock rates the owners of the regular lines of steamers between the East Indies and London agreed to, the London Corn Trade Association hereby gives notice that on the 1st of August next, a clause will be inserted in the East Indian Wheat Contract, making it compulsory for the original sellers to pay the 1s. per ton, which should be contributed by the steam-ship owners agreeably with the Dock rates of 1877, in the event of any steam-ship owner refusing to pay same."

GOVERNMENT RESOLUTION ON THE PORT COMMISSIONERS' ADMINISTRATION REPORT FOR 1880-81.

Calcutta the 15th June 1881.

RESOLUTION.

Read—

The Administration Report of the Commissioners for making Improvements in the Port of Calcutta for the year 1880-81.

The total value of the property held by the Commissioners at the close of the year, estimated with reference only to the amount actually expended on works and in the formation of Reserve Funds, but exclusive of the value of the foreshore lands made over to the Trust by Government free of charge, was Rs. 1,27,36,752, thus—

	Rs.
Expenditure on jetties and works for the accommodation of sea-going vessels ...	49,63,042
Expenditure on wharves, jetties, and landing-stages for the accommodation of boat traffic, and tramway to connect railway with wharves and jetties	50,98,477
Expenditure on buoys, moorings, anchor vessels, and boats, &c.	19,89,974
Investment for Jetty Reserve Fund ...	79,920
Ditto for Port ditto	3,64,250
Ditto for Depreciation Reserve Fund ...	1,99,995
Ditto for Insurance ditto ...	41,094
	1,27,36,752

The addition made to the value of the Port property during the year under review was Rs. 6,25,941, of which Rs. 17,426 were contributions to the Reserve Funds, the balance, Rs. 6,08,515, being the amount spent on improvements.

The above expenditure has been met from the following sources :—

	Rs.
By loan from Government (re-payable) ...	60,25,100
Less unexpended balance	41,022
	59,84,078
By loan from Government (not re-payable) ...	17,65,000
Contribution from Government towards purchase of land	74,584
Contribution from Government towards landing-stage at Prinsep's Ghât	10,000
Contribution from Government towards purchase of River Police Block	11,650
From sale of surplus land	4,07,817
From revenue derived from works since formation of Trust	44,83,623
	1,27,36,752

2. The liabilities of the Trust on the 31st March last amounted to Rs. 70,18,564, made up as follows :—

	Rs.
Consolidated debt re-payable	52,53,564
Port book-debt not re-payable	17,65,000
Total ...	70,18,564

The total re-payable debt, which amounted to Rs. 53,40,349 when the Act for the amendment of the

Calcutta Port Improvement Act of 1870 [IV (B.C.) of 1880] became law, has thus been reduced by Rs. 86,785. By the orders of the Government of India in the Financial Department, issued in September 1878, the further grant of loans by Government under the Public Works Loan Act was prohibited, and it became necessary for the Commissioners to look to the open market for such loans as they might in future require. To enable them to do this, the amending Act of 1880 provided that such loans should only be contracted with the sanction of the local Government and on the security of the whole, or, with the permission of Government, of any part of the property of the Trust, and that the Commissioners should form a sinking fund to pay off within 30 years any loan that might be negociated. It was then believed that these provisions would suffice to protect the creditors of the Trust, and it was hoped, in the words of the Lieutenant-Governor's resolution of last year, that "the ample security afforded by their property and income, and provided by the recent law, would place the Commissioners in a position of credit as borrowers in the open market." These anticipations have, unfortunately, not been realized. The Commissioners invited tenders during the past year for a loan of ten lakhs of rupees, but no response was made, and it was found on enquiry that the Banks objected to some of the clauses of the Act. The Advocate-General was consulted on the question and recorded the following opinion :—

> "Although I think that persons lending money to the Port Commissioners under the provisions of Bengal Act IV of 1880 would be practically safe,

yet there exist doubtless legal objections which may be taken to the scheme developed by that Act with reference to loans and the remedies relating thereto. It has lately become usual to make loans re-payable in default of payment of any one instalment of interest. There is no such provision in the Act, but, on the contrary, there is an express provision by which the principal may be tied up for thirty years.

"Furthermore, no individual debenture-holder has any independent power of action in the event of any instalment of interest being unpaid, and all the ordinary legal remedies by decree and execution, or the appointment of a receiver by a civil court, are taken away from individual debenture-holders by section 17, and the appointment of a receiver is vested in the Lieutenant-Governor in the manner provided by that section. The objections above noticed principally stand in the way of the proposed loan being taken up. Sections 18 and 19, which appear to flow out of provisions of section 17, are, I presume, also objected to.

"Under these circumstances the Act must, I think, be altered in such a manner as to get rid of the two principal objections above noticed; consequently sections 17, 18 and 19 must be omitted.

"As a member of the Select Committee I did not foresee the difficulties which have arisen. I thought that practical safety under the immediate supervision of the local Government, entailing no serious expenses, would have been a sufficient inducement to persons to lend money."

With the consent of the Government of India a new Act (I of 1881) has been passed by the Bengal Council, which, it is believed, will do away with the objections entertained by capitalists to lending money to the Commissioners. The security offered certainly appears ample, and the credit of the Trust should not be affected in any way by such reductions in charges as are in contemplation. It is always open to the Commissioners and Government to revise the scale of charges to meet the requirements of the Trust, though, for his own part, the Lieutenant-Governor believes that the removal of burdens upon trade will in the end improve the income and financial position of the Port.

3. The total expenditure on new works during the year amounted to Rs. 6,19,589, of which Rs. 3,09,230 were spent on jetty works, Rs 1,42,170 on the inland vessels wharves, Rs. 58,436 on the tramway, Rs. 20,067 on the Howrah foreshore road, and Rs. 89,682 on miscellaneous works.

The chief improvements effected by the Commissioners were the following :—A new jetty (No. 8) was constructed at a cost of Rs. 84,058. The jetty embankment continued to make satisfactory progress. (The total length of the work to be carried out is 2,235 lineal feet, of which 1,413 feet have been sanctioned and taken in hand. Of the sheet piling, necessary for this work, 891 feet had been driven up to the end of 1879-80; the remaining 522 feet were completed during the year under review, and the formation of the embankment has proceeded simultaneously with the pile driving). The spaces between the sheds have been mettalled to allow carts to have access to the jetty heads, and the tramway lines have been relaid on the jetties so as to suit the present arrangements

of the sheds. The import shed at No. 1 jetty was taken down and re-erected at No. 4 jetty on the completion of the latter, and there are now four jetties at which cargo can be landed directly into the sheds without the use of trollies. The road between Aheereetollah and Nimtollah Ghâts, a length of 665 feet, was widened by 18 feet. The embankment between No. 8 jetty and Chandpal Ghât is now nearly completed. Two floating stages for the convenience of the inland boat traffic have been finished. Further extensions, amounting in all to 5,100 feet, have been made to the tramway. A new anchor vessel, to replace the *Cavery*, which was sanctioned in July 1880 is nearly ready, and the following works are in progress—twenty new wagons for the tramway, a new hopper barge, engines for the old hopper barge, and new engines and a boiler for the *Vectis*.

4. The gross income from the jetties amounted to Rs. 7,24,900, and the net income after deduction of expenditure to Rs. 2,52,979, the corresponding figures for the previous year being Rs. 6,69,654 and Rs. 2,02,077. The rise in jetty receipts, which has been entirely on import cargo, was due to an increase in the quantity of goods, principally cotton piece-goods, twist, and yarn, passing over the jetties. The increase of expenditure is said to be chiefly owing to the charges necessary for working the new jetty (No. 8) which has been open for the greater part of the year. There was an increase also in the charge for repairs of nearly Rs. 7,000. The proportion of expenditure to gross income was nearly 70 per cent. in the year under review, as against 64 per cent. in 1880-81.

The number of ships (193) using the jetties was greater by one only than was the case last year, but the average

tonnage (1680) of each vessel is higher than it has ever yet been. The rate of clearance seems to be but little affected by the increase in average tonnage.

The following statement shows the extent to which the jetties have been utilized by vessels trading at the port:—

Period.	Number of jetties.	Number of vessels accommodated.	Registered net tonnage.	Total number of days occupied at all jetties.	Total amount contributed by vessels for use of jetties.	Average tonnage of vessels.	Average length of stay at jetties.	Average number of days each jetty was at work throughout the year.	Average amount paid by each vessel for use of jetties.	Total jetty receipts from imports and exports.	Average per vessel.
November 1869	4	75	.....	.....	Rs.	.....	Days.	.....	Rs.	Rs.	Rs. ....
17th October 1870	4	51	66,359	485	.....	1,301	9·3	Year incomplete.	....	.....	...
17th " 31st March 1871	6	143	223,446	1,363	22,900	1,555	9·4	277	160	3,63,145	2,539
1871-72	6	160	264,536	1,433	27,305	1,653	8·9	239	170	4,05,901	2,537
1872-73	7	154	211,238	1,421	29,652	1,371	9·2	213	192	4,21,774	2,739
1873-74	7	142	209,808	1,590	32,570	1,477	11·2	227	229	4,82,143	3,395
1874-75	7	156	246,804	1,455	31,230	1,578	9·3	234	208	5,42,663	3,479
1875-76	7	192	304,218	1,958	40,505	1,584	10·2	280	204	5,95,442	3,101
1876-77	7	232	355,634	2,379	63,555	1,533	10·3	342	398	7,71,825	3,327
1877-78	7	184	294,717	1,991	83,517	1,601	10·8	285	454	6,60,106	3,583
1878-79	7	192	315,263	1,944	73,407	1,642	10·1	277	382	6,56,409	3,418
1879-80	8	193	324,187	1,982	73,762	1,680	10·2	248	382	7,14,189	3,700
1880-81											

5. The income and expenditure on account of the tramway have this year, for the first time, been shown separately from those for the inland vessels wharves. Excluding, therefore, the former items, the figures for the wharves alone for the past three years appear to be as follow:—

	Income.	Expenditure.
	Rs.	Rs.
1878-79	3,79,375	2,01,927
1879-80	3,46,022	2,47,516
1880-81	3,76,444	1,92,091

It is pointed out, however, that the charge for interest included in the expenditure of 1878-79 and 1879-80, comprised a considerable sum on account of the tramway. The tolls collected at the inland vessels wharves show an increase of Rs. 34,747 as compared with the previous year, the total amount being Rs. 3,70,568. The anticipations expressed last year that the railway would to an increasing extent absorb the grain and seed traffic to the detriment of wharves' receipts have not been fulfilled in the year under review, as the tolls from these two sources are higher by Rs. 41,000 than in 1879-80. There has, on the other hand, been a falling off of Rs. 8,292 under the head of "Tolls from jute."

6. The new agreement between the Eastern Bengal Railway Company and the Commissioners regarding the working of the tramway came into operation during the past year. Under it the Commissioners have made over to the Railway Company the terminal charges and the amounts paid for loading and unloading goods, while the Company defrays the charges for the supply of coolie labour, and pays to the Port a monthly rental of Rs. 1,000

for the premises occupied at Armenian Ghât and Ruthtollah. The total earnings shown under the new system amount to Rs. 1,12,026, against Rs, 1,34,901 under the old in the previous year. The falling off is, however, apparent only, and disappears if the rent now paid by the Tramway Company, and the decrease in expenditure, amounting to Rs. 25,096, be taken into consideration. The net revenue was Rs. 30,557, as against Rs. 28,536 in 1879-80. The advantages offered by the tramway are fully appreciated by the mercantile public, and there is no doubt that its extension to Chandpal Ghât, and the increased facilities for its use, which the additional rolling-stock now under construction will afford, will further add to its popularity and render it a very profitable source of income to the Commissioners.

7. The receipts and ordinary expenditure on account of the Strand Bank lands varied little from the figures of the previous year. The net revenue was Rs. 63,153, against Rs. 69,406, owing apparently to the outlay of Rs. 6,442 on 'renewals', a new and unexplained heading. The improvements now going on upon the Howrah foreshore will probably augment materially the income of this portion of the Trust.

8. The following table exhibits the gross income, expenditure, and profits of the Harbour Master's Department, or Port Proper, for the past ten years:—

	Gross Income.	Expenditure.	Profit.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1871-72 ...	4,48,111	2,80,939	1,67,172
1872-73 ...	5,43,020	3,95,186	1,47,852
1873-74 ...	4,26,974	3,84,858	42,116
1874-75 ...	4,25,390	4,19,923	5,467

	Gross Income.	Expenditure.	Profit.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs
1875-76 ...	4,30,551	4,24,931	5,620
1876-77 ...	4,69,290	4,23,566	45,724
1877-78 ...	6,10,171	4,28,909	1,81,262
1878-79 ...	5,80,184	3,98,106	1,82,078
1879-80 ...	5,61,299	3,92,353	1,68,946
1880-81 ...	4,93,644	4,63,514	30,130

The net income for the year under review exhibits a very considerable falling off as compared with the years immediately preceding it. None of these can, however, be taken as normal years. The Madras famine caused a large influx of shipping at the commencement of the period, and the subsequent depression of trade led to the detention in port for long periods of a large number of vessels in 1878 and 1879. The receipts, moreover, were enhanced in the latter year, as was explained in the Resolution reviewing the Commissioners' Report for 1879-80, by the payment of a debt of Rs. 36,000 by Government. It is to be noted also that the charge for Depreciation, which amounted to Rs. 150 only in 1879-80, was unusually high in 1880-81, amounting to Rs. 80,940, and including the cost of a new anchor vessel to replace the *Cavery*. The Lieutenant-Governor has recently drawn the attention of the Commissioners to the question of the Annual Depreciation charge, and the correct method of treating the Reserve Depreciation Fund.

9. It is satisfactory to observe that the total number of vessels entering the port during the year (984) was higher than it has been for the last fifteen years, setting aside the abnormal periods in 1876-77 and in 1877-78. The number of canal steamers has risen from 128 in 1878-79

to 163 in the year under review. The average tonnage of these vessels, though still very high (2,581 tons) shows a slight tendency to decrease, having reached 2,680 tons in the preceding year, and 2,714 in 1878-79. The following table exhibiting the number of sailing vessels and steamers visiting the port during the last eleven years, and their average tonnage, shows conclusively the tendency of the general trade of the port to pass away from the former class of shipping :—

	Sailing Vessels.		Steamers.	
	Number.	Average tonnage.	Number.	Average tonnage.
1870-71 ...	672	991	259	1,266
1871-72 ...	655	1,052	300	1,439
1872-73 ...	615	1,024	338	1,523
1873-74 ...	552	1,027	429	1,488
1874-75 ..	473	1,037	454	1,740
1875-76 ...	508	1,083	406	1,785
1876-77 ...	609	1,164	552	1,788
1877-78 ...	646	1,149	726	1,810
1878-79 ...	478	1,112	489	1,838
1879-80 ...	454	1,250	442	1,920
1880-81 ...	478	1,194	506	1,994

10. The number of accidents to ships within the jurisdiction of the Commissioners (nine), is in excess of that of last year (four), but in two cases only was any serious damage done. The *Cape Verde* when dropping down the river, on the 12th August 1880, forged over a buoy in Garden Reach and knocked a hole in her bottom, and the *Meinam* when lying at anchor sustained considerable damage owing to the steam ship *City of Venice*, in charge of a pilot, running into her. In neither of these cases was the Assistant Harbour Master on board to blame. The floating fire-engine *Hoogly* was kept under

steam throughout the year, and was employed on sixteen occasions. None of the fires which occurred on board sea-going vessels was of a grave character, but the *Hoogly* was of considerable service to the *Cape Verde* on the occasion of the accident to that vessel. Some difficulty is said to be experienced in keeping the floating fire-engine under weigh while the pumps are being worked, as also in turning her in a narrow channel. To obviate this it is proposed to fit her with twin screws worked by separate engines. The Lieutenant-Governor will await the report of the Commissioners on this point. All the moorings belonging to the port were examined during the year, and, where necessary, repaired. Two new sets of moorings were laid down at Meteabruj Ghât for oil ships, and one swinging mooring off Calcutta. It appears from the report of the Deputy Conservator, that considerable inconvenience was felt for want of mooring accommodation in August, September and October, and the Commissioners have in consequence provided in the Budget Estimates for the current year for the expenditure necessary for laying an additional line of moorings from Chandpal Ghât to Fort Point, to replace the accommodation lost by the silting up of the moorings at Prinsep's Ghât and Hastings.

11. The return of dredging operations, which was not satisfactory last year, is even less so in that under review, as will appear from the following table :—

Particulars.	1880-81.	1879-80.	1878-79.	1877-78.	1876-77.	1875-76.	1874-75.
Number of days under steam	178	171	152	221	192	190	214
,, of hours ditto	1,029	1,418	1,161	,809	1,563	1,646	1,848
,, of barges filled	427	614	598	1,230	988	1,054	686
,, of cubic feet dredged.	10,67,500	15,35,000	14,82,000	30,76,000	24,71,500	26.35,500	17,16,636
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Cost of establishment	13,547	15,349	16,220	15,829	15,437	15,724	16,724
,, of working expenses	6,114	8,805	9,504	12,946	10,099	11,738	12,236
,, of repairs	13,782	6,571	9,870	12,083	11,639	7,989	5,974
Total	33,443	30,725	35,594	40,858	37,175	35,401	34,934
Amount earned by barges	6,826	18,0"1	24,310	30,2001	14,307	....	....
Net cost of dredging	26,617	12,654	11,284	10,857	22,868	35,401	34,934
Rate per 1,000 cubic feet	24·93	8·2	7·6	3·5	9·2	13·4	20·3

It is explained that during four months the dredger was laid up for repairs, and that for the whole year one barge only was at work. The latter fact, combined with the employment of the *Hetty* in towing vessels through the bridge, is said to account for the small earnings from towage.

12. The Moyapore Powder Magazine was inspected twice, and was found to be in good order. The total quantity of powder stowed in it was 100,257 lbs., besides 30 sample packages, and 264 ammunition packages; of this amount 32,882 lbs,, 34 sample packages, and 29 ammunition packages, remained in store on the 30th April last.

13. The total amount paid as license fees for cargo and passengers' boats, and the number of boats surveyed and licensed were as follows :—Rs. 18,420 paid by 5,548 cargo-boats, and Rs. 7,154 by 2,060 ordinary passenger boats, eight passenger steamers, two flats and one budgerow. Rs. 2,303 were received for licenses to manjhis, and Rs. 393 as registering charges.

14. The question of the advisability of carrying out permanent improvements from capital, and devoting surplus revenue to reducing the charges of the jetties, wharves, and Port, has been prominently before Government in connection with the Budget Estimates for the current year, and is noticed at length by the Commissioners in their present report. The Government is still in correspondence with them as to the proper mode of giving full effect to the Lieutenant-Governor's views upon this subject. The proposals of the Commissioners with reference to the provision of bonding accommodation, and the erection of a tea warehouse, have not yet come before Govern-

ment in any complete form. The Lieutenant-Governor has said that he desires to know the opinion of the mercantile community upon these schemes. He is glad to observe that the removal of the municipal pumping station from Chaudpal Ghât is now in a fair way of being carried out.

15. The question of the amalgamation of the duties of the Port Officer with those of the Port Commissioners was taken up again during the year under review, and a Committee, which was appointed to consider the subject in all its bearings, made a report, of which the following is a summary:—

(1) We do not recommend the transfer of the Pilot Service to the Port Commissioners;

(2) But we recommend that the port approaches, including the light-ships, light-houses, buoying and survey, the expenditure on which has to be met from Port Funds, should be transferred to the Port Commissioners.

(3) Under this arrangement the Port Officer would not be transferred to the Port Commissioners, but would remain in charge of the Pilot Service and of all duties connected with vessels under the Government of Bengal. He would conduct the quarterly examinations of masters, mates, engineers, and pilots, and make such surveys under the Passengers Act as are required by Government. These duties are, however, hardly sufficient to occupy the whole time and attention of the Port Officer, and the Committee think that they might with advantage be amalgamated with the duties of the Superintendent of Marine.

(4) If the appointment is to be maintained separate from that of the Superintendent of Marine, the title of the officer holding it should be changed, and the officer of the Commissioners, now known as Deputy Conservator and Harbour Master, should be styled the Port Officer.

(5) The officer in charge of the port approaches should be styled the Deputy Conservator. He should be a thoroughly trained Marine Surveyor, and his head-quarters should be at Diamond Harbour.

(6) The block of the port approaches to be made over to the Port Commissioners without any charge for interest, provided the Port Commissioners agree to maintain and renew it as may be necessary.

(7) Before the transfer is made, Act XII of 1875 should be amended, and the schedule of port dues for Calcutta, increased from four annas to six annas per ton, a corresponding reduction of 15 per cent. being made in the schedule of pilotage charges.

(8) The office establishment now employed under the Port Officer on work in connection with the port approaches to be taken over, as far as necessary, by the Port Commissioners; the officer in charge of the Pilot Service to retain the establishment now employed on this work.

(9) The officers and men employed on the survey, light-vessels, &c., connected with the port approaches to retain, on their transfer to the Port

Commissioners, all the privileges they now enjoy in regard to pension and leave.

The Lieutenant-Governor concurred in the views taken by the Committee which he recommended for the acceptance of the Government of India. The Supreme Government has consented generally to the proposal, and the necessary arrangements for carrying it into effect are now under consideration.

16. An important addition has been made to the duties of the Commissioners, by their investiture with all the powers conferred on the local Government by chapter II of the Merchant Shipping Act of last year, except the powers of appointing a Judge and Assessors for the Court of Survey under sections 14 and 15, and of making rules under section 68 of the Act.

17. The new Act for the amendment of Act IV (B.C.) of 1880, provides for the appointment of an extra Port Commissioner, which will enable the interests of Howrah to be represented. It also empowers the local Government to make rules to regulate the employment of European sailors and others in the port. This provision was necessary, as it was discovered that the Commissioners could not by their by-laws interfere to prevent the unnecessary exposure to the sun of sailors on board ships within their jurisdiction.

18. An arrangement has now been arrived at between the Commissioners and the Calcutta Municipal Corporation, under which the latter has consented to reduce the cost of filtered water supplied to the shipping at the jetties, from Rs. 8 to Rs. 4 per 1,000 gallons.

19. The Commissioners held 28 meetings during the year, the attendance at which was satisfactory and testifies to the strong interest taken by them, as a body, in their important duties. Mr. Buckland was Chairman of the Commissioners throughout the year, an office which he resigned shortly after its close, on his retirement from the service of Government. The Commissioners have placed on record their appreciation of the services which he rendered to the Port Trust during the time that he held the office of Chairman, and their regret at his retirement.

The thanks of Government are again due to the Commissioners generally, and to their Vice-Chairman, Mr. W. Duff Bruce in particular, for the efficient manner in which the affairs of the Trust have been conducted during the period under review.

By order of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal,

A. MACKENZIE,
Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

No. 42.

Copy of the above Resolution and of the Report forwarded to the Secretary to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, for the information of the Chamber.

By order of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal,

C. S. BAYLEY,
Offg. Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

GOVERNMENT RESOLUTION ON THE PORT OFFICER'S REPORT FOR 1880-81.

Calcutta the 30th August 1881.

RESOLUTION.

Read—

The Annual Report of the Port Officer for the year 1880-81.

The report is submitted by Lieutenant Stiffe, who was Port Officer throughout the year.

2. The number of pilots, which at the commencement of the year was 67 out of a sanctioned strength of 70, was reduced by casualties, before its close, to 63, there having been three deaths and one retirement. At the end of March, the Port Officer brought to the notice of Government that the number, even as thus lowered, was in excess of the immediate and probable future requirements of the port, the tendency of the shipping being at present towards an increase in the tonnage, and a reduction in the number of vessels, and that there was thus at times insufficient employment for the actual number of running pilots. A Committee was appointed to report on this subject and on that of the distribution of tonnage among the several grades of pilots. The recommendations of the Committee, which are in the direction of a gradual but moderate reduction in the number of pilots, and a consequent rise in the maximum tonnage allowed to the lower grades, have commended themselves to the Lieutenant-Governor, and are at present under the consideration of the Government of India,

Any change that may be made must necessarily be of a tentative and guarded nature. A Hooghly pilot is not trained to his work in a day, and there must be a sufficient reserve to meet sudden emergencies and unexpected increases of traffic as at the time of the Madras famine.

3. As already noticed in the Lieutenant-Governor's Resolution on the Report of the Port Commissioners, the number of steamers which arrived at Calcutta during the year was 506, with an average burthen of 1,994 tons, as against 442, with an average burthen of 1,920 tons in 1879-80. In the same period the number of sailing vessels rose from 454 to 478, with a decrease in average tonnage from 1,250 to 1,194 tons. Exclusive of pilot, light and other Government vessels, and of the steamers plying to and from Chandbally and Balasore, the total number of ships requiring pilotage was 1,999, of which 1,016 were steamers and 983 sailing vessels, and the average burthen being 1,601 tons. The corresponding figures for 1879-80 were 876 steamers and 915 sailing vessels, with an average burthen of 1,584 tons, and an interesting diagram attached to the report shows clearly the general tendency towards the employment of ships of deep draught, and of steamers in preference to sailing vessels, of which an illustration is also given in the following table, showing the numbers of ships of all kinds drawing over 21 feet of water, piloted during the year.

Diagram referred to in page 249.

	21 to 22 feet.				22 to 23 feet.				23 to 24 feet.				24 to 25 feet.				25 to 26 feet.				26 to 27 feet.				Total.			
	1879-80.		1880-81.		1879-80.		1880-81.		1879-80.		1880-81.		1879-80.		1880-81.		1879-80.		1880-81.		1879-80.		1880-81.		1879-80.		1880-81.	
	In.	Out.	In.	Out.	In.	Out.	In.	Out.	In.	Out.	In.	Out.	In.	Out.	In.	Out.	In.	Out.	In.	Out.	In.	Out.	In.	Out.	In.	Out.	In.	Out.
Steamers ...	22	38	27	43	10	58	21	86	6	26	8	49	1	9	...	23	...	1	..	4	...	1	..	...	39	133	56	205
Sailing-vessels..	63	97	45	130	19	40	21	57	3	10	2	16	...	5	...	6	...	1	...	...	..	...	..	..	85	153	68	209
Total..	85	135	72	173	29	98	42	143	9	36	10	65	1	14	..	29	...	2	...	4	..	1	..	..	124	286	124	414

The proportion of sailing vessels taking steam has increased from 93·8 to 95·7 per cent. The average monthly number of vessels falling to each member of the Pilot Service was as follows:—Branch Pilots 4·72, Master Pilots 2·88, and Mate Pilots 3·12. Two vessels were piloted by leadsmen. Shortly before the close of the year the rule prohibiting absolutely the employment of leadsmen to pilot vessels was so far relaxed as to admit of vessels of small tonnage utilizing the services of passed leadsmen in the absence of a qualified pilot.

4. Forty-six vessels in all ran aground during the year, but no damage was received in any instance. In thirteen cases the pilot in charge was considered to blame, and nine pilots in all were reprimanded, warned, or cautioned. Seven cases of collision occurred, in one of which a boat was sunk, and in two of which damage was sustained. Four cases were the result of accident, and in one the boat run down was to blame; in one a steamer, not in charge of a pilot, collided with a pilot brig. The remaining collision was that between the steamer *Curlew* and the Maldive sloop *Mallinga*, as to which an enquiry was held, the result of which was to exonerate the pilot in charge of the *Curlew*. The accidents which occurred within the limits of the port have been noticed in the Resolution on the Port Commissioners' Report. In none of them were members of the Pilot Service to blame. Two Courts sat during the year to enquire into the conduct of pilots. In the first case a charge of intoxication was made against the Commander of a pilot vessel, not a member of the service, and being brought home, the officer in question was removed. The second case was an inquiry at the request of the Agents into the circumstances attending the detention of a ship while proceeding down the river in charge of a Branch Pilot. The officer was acquitted of all blame. On the whole, the Lieutenant-

Governor concurs with the Port Officer, who remarks that the result of the year's working is "exceedingly creditable to the individual officers of the Pilot Service, who have all worked well. It also testifies to the practical efficiency of the River Survey."

5. The survey of the Hooghly was throughout the year under Mr. Reed, who has been temporarily confirmed in the appointment of River Surveyor, Mr. Laycock, who for many years past has done good and useful work in this department, having now retired. The more important changes in the river bed are noticed by the Port Officer. The question of the best manner of lighting the Hooghly has recently been under the consideration of a Committee, who have submitted a careful report on the subject. Lieutenant Stiffe has proposed to try, as an experiment, lighting some portions with Pintsch's Gas buoys, and is now, while on leave in England, making enquiries as to their working. If it were found possible to substitute self-acting mechanical lights for the existing light-vessels, the saving to Government would no doubt be great, but no considerations of economy can be allowed to lessen the efficiency of the lighting of the Sandheads. The necessity for a careful and scientific survey of the banks of the Hooghly has long been recognized, and the Lieutenant-Governor is glad to learn that the Government of India hope to be able shortly to spare a professional party to assist in this work.

6. The services of the *Undaunted* when available, and, in her absence, of the *Celerity*, have been placed at the disposal of this Government when required during the year, and an arrangement has now been made with the Government of India by which the former vessel is to be made over permanently to the Bengal Marine. The *Foam*, formerly employed as a pilot-brig, has now been converted into a spare floating light-vessel. A new vessel has

been ordered to replace the pilot-brig *Chinsurah*, which is now 22 years old. The anchor-vessel *Vulcan* was sold during the year, and a new vessel to replace her has been launched since its close. The total cost of the recovery of lost chains and anchors amounted to Rs. 711-5-6, and the earnings actually realized from the same source to Rs. 583-1, besides four anchors and 131 fathoms of chain which have been recovered and are now in stock, the value of which is estimated at Rs. 710.

7. The Refuge Houses were visited and replenished during the year.

8. The number of certificates granted on surveys of inland steamers amounted to 170 against 143 in the previous year. Twenty-six new permits were granted, and seven old permits renewed, allowing native coasting vessels of between 100 and 200 tons burthen to navigate the Hooghly without a pilot. Under the English Merchant Shipping Act of 1854, three vessels were registered. No registry was effected under Act X of 1841. Sixty-seven A. certificates, and eighty-eight B. certificates, were issued under the Native Passenger Ships Act. Thirty-seven persons were examined for Colonial certificates of competency, of whom 21 failed to pass. Of the 16 certificates granted, three were for masters, seven for first mates, one for only mate, one for second mate, three for first class, and two for second class, engineers. Of 51 candidates for local certificates, 31 were successful, one qualifying as master, seven as first mates, two as only mates, three as second mates, two as second class engineers, and sixteen as engine-drivers. Three candidates applied unsuccessfully for local certificates as first class engineers of inland steamers. Under Act VII (B.C.) of 1879, eight certificates of competency were granted to command inland vessels, six after examination, and the remainder to officers who had previously passed a steam-tug pilot's examination. In April 1880

five licenses were granted, after examination, to native pilots to take charge of *dhonis* not exceeding 500 tons burthen. The licenses expired in December, and were renewed for another year. A scale of pilotage has recently been sanctioned for these craft.

9. Under the Indian Merchant Shipping Act of 1880 the Port Officer was in February appointed Receiver of Wreck for the Port of Calcutta. The proposal to amalgamate the duties of the Port Officer as Conservator of the Port approaches with those of the Port Commissioners in accordance with the suggestion of the Committee appointed to consider the subject, has been sanctioned by the Government of India, and will, in all probability, take effect before the close of the year, the arrangements necessary to carry it out being now under the consideration of Government and of the Port Commissioners.

By order of the Lieut.-Governor of Bengal,
A. MACKENZIE,
Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

No. 1231.

Copy of the Report and of this Resolution forwarded to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce for information.

By order of the Lieut.-Governor of Bengal,
C. S. BAYLEY,
Offg. Under-Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

THE RAILWAYS OF INDIA.

The following official statement regarding all the Railways in this country, containing the statistics and short sketch of each line from its commencement to the end of 1880, is of so much interest and importance, that the Committee have reproduced it in this Report for the information of members of the Chamber.

Statement showing the mileage, age, cost and general results of working of Indian Railways for the year 1880.

BROAD GAUGE.—5 Feet 6 Inches.

Number.	RAILWAYS.	Miles open at end of year.	Mean mileage open during year.	Mean age of lines at end of year.	Capital outlay at close of year.	Cost per mile open.	Gross earnings during year.	Working expenses during year.	Net profits of year.	Net profits per cent.
					Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
1	East Indian ...	1,504·25	1,504·25	17·73	33,03,98,294	2,19,643	4,29,14,430	1,41,53,658	2,87,60,772	8·71
2	Eastern Bengal ...	158·00	158·00	15·70	3,31,68,524	2,08,935	44,51,318	19,07,547	25,43,771	7·67
3	Oudh and Rohilkand ...	546·75	546·75	8·28	5,77,96,380	1,05,709	44,55,150	25,50,740	19,04,410	3·30
4	Sind, Punjab and Delhi	663·50	663·50	14·65	11,04,52,484	1,66,470	1,21,67,588	63,84,358	57,83,230	5·24
5	Madras ...	858·00	858·00	16·76	11,08,55,385	1,29,202	61,62,545	42,05,409	19,57,136	1·77
6	Great Indian Peninsula	1,275·75	1,275·75	16·20	24,99,77,200	1,95,945	2,49,53,253	1,38,47,702	1,11,05,551	4·44
7	Bombay, Baroda and Central India ...	*444·00	444·00	14·94	8,28,42,480	1,86,582	82,44,375	35,08,452	47,35,923	5·72
8	Calcutta and South-Eastern ...	28·00	28·00	18·36	66,39,843	2,37,137	1,42,098	1,01,344	40,754	0·61
9	Patna-Gya ...	57·00	57·00	1·64	32,20,951	56,508	4,81,556	2,70,300	2,11,256	6·56
10	Dildarnagar-Ghazipur	12·00	2·89	0·24	5,63,297	46,941	8,351	10,717	–2,366	–0·42
11	Dhond and Manmad ...	145·75	145·75	2·74	1,04,58,463	71,756	6,95,094	6,06,875	88,219	0·85
12	Wardha Coal ...	46·50	46·50	4·66	56,15,804	1,20,769	1,55,900	2,38,376	–82,476	–1·47
13	Sindia ...	66·50	66·50	2·15	81,51,903	1,22,585	2,01,824	1,77,714	24,110	0·30
14	Punjab Northern ...	224·75	180·12	2·78	4,04,37,319	1,79,921	33,68,284	28,04,113	5,64,171	1·40
15	Indus Valley ...	653·00	594·18	1·96	6,92,82,608	1,06,099	64,72,659	45,38,397	19,34,262	2·79
16	Khamgaon ...	8·00	8·00	10·83	5,08,187	63,523	27,363	23,106	4,257	0·83
17	Amraoti ...	6·00	6·00	9·87	4,34,261	72,377	50,865	47,226	3,639	0·84
18	Nizam's ...	121·00	121·00	6·23	1,20,62,228	99,688	7,02,716	4,78,407	2,24,309	1·86
	Total and average ...	6,818·75	6,706·19	13·09	1,13,28,65,611	1,66,140	11,56,55,369	5,58,54,441	5,98,00,928	5·28

* Including Patri Branch.

NARROW GAUGE.—METRE.

Number.	RAILWAYS.	Miles open at end of year.	Mean mileage open during year.	Mean age of lines at end of year.	Capital outlay at close of year.	Cost per mile open.	Gross earnings during year.	Working expenses during year.	Net profits of year.	Net profits per cent.
					Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
1	South Indian ...	645·25	637·26	7·61	4,16,72,963	64,584	35,59,594	26,29,576	9,30,018	2·23
2	Nalhati ...	27·25	27·25	17·03	3,25,210	11,934	69,925	73,653	—3,728	—1·15
3	Northern Bengal .	243·50	243·50	3·03	1,96,73,726	80,796	14,49,296	8,54,386	5,94,910	3·02
4	Tirhoot ...	85·00	85·00	4·55	51,51,330	62,821	4,52,924	2,62,199	1,90,725	3·70
5	Muttra-Hathras ...	29·00	29·00	5·20	10,88,160	37,523	1,35,226	77,556	57,670	5·30
6	Cawnpore and Farrukhabad ...	49·25	2·29	0·05	27,08,089	54,987	2,202	5,134	—2,932	—0·11
7	Nagpur and Chhattisgarh ...	53·00	39·21	0·74	30,37,689	57,315	1,03,952	82,681	21,271	0·70
8	Rangoon and Irrawaddy Valley ...	161·00	161·00	3·67	1,23,07,244	76,443	13,22 710	8,01,626	5,21,084	4·23
9	Rajputana ...	489·50	470·30	5·52	3,40,61,947	69,585	37,23,719	24,90,414	12,33,305	3·62
10	Holkar and Sindia-Neemuch ...	254·50	227·71	3·22	2,53,37,858	99,559	14,01,259	10,47,268	3,53,991	1·40
11	Western Rajputana ...	82·63	82·63	1·13	63,17,255	76,452	6,50,103	5,57,724	92,379	1·46
12	His Highness the Gaekwar's ..	57·75	49·07	3·37	11,44.210	19,813	1,28,824	63,687	65,137	5·69
	Total and average ...	2,177·63	2,054·22	5·30	15,28,25,681	70,180	1,29,99,734	89,45,904	40,53,830	2·65
	Total and average Guaranteed ...	6,095·50	6,087·51	14·76	1,01,71,63,710	1,66,871	10,69,08,253	4,91,87,442	5,77,20,811	5·67
	Total and average State	2,900·88	2,672·90	3·72	26,85,27,582	92,568	2,17,46,850	1,56,12,903	61,33,947	2·29
	GRAND TOTAL AND AVERAGE ...	8,996·38	8,760·41	11·20	1,28,56,91,292	42,912	12,86,55,103	6,48,00,345	6,38,54,758	4·97

1. East Indian.—This line extends from Calcutta (Howrah) to Delhi, with a branch of about 224 mile, from Nynee, near Allahabad, to Jubbulpore, and several shorter branches, aggregating 82 miles, none of which exceed 27 miles in length. It is in junction with the Sind, Punjab, and Delhi Railway at Gazeeabad, the Great Indian Peninsula Railway at Jubbulpore, the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway at Aligarh and Cawnpore, the Sindia State Railway at Agra, the Patna-Gya State Railway at Bankipore, all of which lines are of the same gauge. It also exchanges traffic with the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway *vid* Benares, across the River Ganges where a connecting bridge is now being built. Its junctions with narrow gauge lines are at Nalhati, Cawnpore, Agra, Hathras Road and Delhi; it is also connected with the Tirhoot State Railway by a short branch and ferry at Barh.

The Railway has a double road for 411 miles.

There are 158 stations having an average distance apart of 9½ miles, and 18 engine stations.

Construction was commenced in January 1851, and the first section 23¼ miles from Howrah to Hooghly was opened on the 15th August 1854. The line has been opened throughout its whole length since January 1871.

The earthwork and bridges generally are for a double line, except the superstructure of large bridges. The road consists of double-headed rails varying in weight from 74 to 82lbs. per yard, carried on cross-sleepers for the most part of wood and small proportion of iron. Steel rails are being used for renewals where the traffic is heavy.

2. Eastern Bengal.—This line extends from Calcutta (Sealdah) to Goalundo, on the bank of the Ganges near its confluence with the Brahmaputra, with a branch 4 miles long to Kooshtea, also on the right bank of the Ganges, about 45 miles up stream; there is also a short branch 2 miles long to Chitpore, where junction is effected with the Calcutta Port Trust Railway; there is a connection with the Calcutta and South-Eastern State Railway at the terminus Sealdah. From Poradaha, at the 103rd mile, there is a State Branch worked by the Company 13 miles long to Damukdia on the Ganges, which is connected with the Northern Bengal State Railway by a steam ferry.

The Railway is laid with a single track throughout. There are 32 stations at an average distance apart of 5 miles, and 4 engine stations. Construction was commenced in April 1859, and the first section (45¼ miles) from Calcutta to Ranaghat was opened in September, and the second section (62 miles) to Jagati in November 1862. The extension to Goalundo was opened in January 1871.

The earthwork and the masonry of bridges and viaducts have been constructed for a double line. The rails are double-headed, weighing 74lbs. per yard, and have been laid principally on creosoted pine sleepers.

3. Oudh and Rohilkhand.—The Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway runs in a north-westerly direction from Benares, and is approximately parallel to the East Indian Railway at a mean distance of 80 miles, the River Ganges running between the two. It has junctions only with the East Indian Railway which are noted in para. I above.

The Railway is laid with a single track throughout. There are 80 stations averaging 7 miles apart, and 5 engine stations.

Construction was commenced in January 1864 ; the length of 42 miles from Lucknow in the direction of Cawnpore was opened in April 1867 ; two other sections of 30 miles each were opened on the 1st February 1872, and with the exception of the bridge at Cawnpore and junction with the East Indian Railway at that station, which was completed in July 1875, the line may be said to have been opened throughout in the early part of 1874.

Land has been taken for a double line, but the formation is for a single way ; between Lucknow and Nawabganj, however, the masonry of the bridges has been constructed for a double track. The permanent way adopted consists of 60lbs. flat-footed rails on cast-iron oval bowl sleepers, but there are short lengths on wrought iron saddle sleepers, and of Bessemer steel saddle sleepers.

4. Sind Punjab and Delhi.—This Railway consists of two distinct and separate sections, *viz.*, the Punjab section 554 miles in length from Gazeeabad, the junction with the East Indian Railway, to Sher Shah Bunder on the left bank of the Indus and 15 miles beyond Mooltan, and the Sind section 110 miles long from Kotri, the junction with the

Indus Valley State Railway to Kurrachee. On the Punjab Section there is a junction at Lahore with the Punjab Northern State Railway, and another at Mozufferabad, 7 miles to the east of Mooltan, with the Indus Valley State Railway.

The road is laid with a single track on both sections, except 4½ miles of double way in Kurrachee.

There are 73 stations on the Punjab Section being at an average distance of 7½ miles, and 10 on the Sind Section at 12 miles interals. There are 6 engine stations on the former and 2 on the latter.

The Sind Section was commenced in April 1858, and was opened throughout its length in May 1861.

The length from Amritsar to Mooltan and Sher Shah, 250 miles, was commenced in February 1859, and was opened to Lahore, 32 miles, in April 1862, and from Lahore to Mooltan, 208 miles in April 1865.

The portion from Gazeeabad to Amritsar, 304 miles, was commenced early in 1864, and in May 1865 Messrs. Brassey and Company entered into a contract for the construction of the line in five years; this period was subsequently, extended to six years, owing to the magnitude and large additions made to the original design of the Sutlej bridge. The first length to Meerut City, 27½ miles, was opened in April 1867, and in November of the same year 26 miles were opened from the Beas River to Amritsar. The uninterrupted communication between Delhi *viâ* Gazeeabad and Mooltan being established by the completion of the Sutlej bridge in November 1869.

On the Sind Section the earthwork is for a single line; masonry of bridges for a double line, iron superstructure one road. The permanent way consists of double-headed rails, 65lbs. to the yard, laid on sleepers of creosoted pine and babul.

From Amritsar to Mooltan and Sher Shah the earthwork and bridges are for a single way. Double-headed rails of 68lbs. per yard have been used throughout, 77½ miles being supported on Greaves' bowls, the remainder on wooden sleepers, which, however, are being renewed with iron.

From Amritsar to the Beas the earthwork is for a double road; that of the remaining distance to Gazeeabad is for a single line. The rails used were single-headed of "steel iron" weighing 60lbs. to the yard; these have, however, ailed and are being replaced by solid steel.

5. Madras.—This Railway at Arkonam, 42 miles to the west of Madras, bifurcates into two Main Lines, *viz.*, the north-west line which meets the Great Indian Peninsula Railway at Raichur, 308 miles,* and has a branch 31½ miles long to Bellary, and the south-west line which runs to Beypore on the west coast, 364 miles,* with branches to Bangalore, 87 miles, and to Mettupalaiyam at the foot of the Nilgiri Hills, 26 miles.

There are junctions with the South Indian Railway at Arkonam and Erode, and with the Mysore State Railway at Bangalore, both these lines being of the metre gauge.

With the exception of a double road from Madras to Arkonam the line is single throughout.

There are 105 stations giving intervals of 8¼ miles and 10 engine stations.

Work was commenced on the south-west line in June 1853, which, in July 1856, was opened to Arcot, 63 miles, through communication with Beypore being established in May 1862. Junction was effected with the Great Indian Peninsula Railway in March 1871.

Except on the double portion the embankments are for a single track, but the bridges and viaducts are built for a double way, except on the Nilgiri and Bellari branches. The rails weighing from 65 to 84lbs. per yard are supported on iron pot sleepers, with the exception of a few miles near Beypore of creosoted pine. The south-west line was originally laid with sleepers of indigenous woods, but these were not found to answer, and have nearly all been replaced by iron.

6. Great Indian Peninsula.—This line starting from Bombay divides into two at Kalyan on the 33rd mile, the north-east line, 582 miles,* meeting the East Indian Railway at Jubbulpore with a branch of 245 miles to Nagpur, and a short coal line of 12 miles to Mohpani, and the south-east line, 409 miles,* meeting the Madras Railway at Raichur, with a branch of 7¼ miles to Campuli at the foot of the Ghauts (seldom worked). Besides those above mentioned, there are junctions with Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway at Dadur, the Dhond and Manmad State Railway at Dhond and Manmad, the Wardha Coal Railway at Wardha, the two small Berar lines and the Nizam's Railway all of the same guage, and also with the metre gauge Nagpur and Chhattisgarh State Railway at Nagpur.

* *From the junction Arkonam.*

There are 325 miles of double road.

There are 163 stations at average intervals of nearly 8 miles, and 17 engine stations. Construction was commenced in October 1850, and a length of 20½ miles from Bombay to Thana was opened in April 1853 : this was the first Railway opened in India.

Excepting the double portion the earthwork is for a single line, and the bridges and viaducts for a double line of rails. Most of the rails weigh 68lbs. per yard ; on some short lengths, however, rails weighing 84lbs. to the yard have been laid. Most of the rails are of iron, but are being replaced by steel as renewals become necessary. The sleepers are chiefly of wood with a portion of iron bowls.

7. Bombay Baroda and Central India.—The Railway runs nearly due north from Bombay, skirting the coast for 200 miles of its length ; it has two short branches, *viz.*, from Anand to Pali, 32 miles, and from Viramgam to Kharaghora, 22½ miles ; this latter is the property of the State, but is worked as part of the Company's undertaking.

The junction with the Great Indian Peninsula Railway being only 6 miles from Bombay is used solely for the exchange of goods traffic. There are junctions with the Bhaunagar-Gondal and the Rajputana State Railways, both metre gauge, at Wadhwan and Sabarmati near Ahmedabad respectively ; there are also two junctions with His Highness the Gaekwar's line of 2 feet 6 inches gauge at Miyagam and Baroda.

The Railway has a double track for short sections, aggregating 23 miles in length.

There are 74 stations at an average distance of 6 miles apart, and 8 engine stations.

Work was commenced in May 1856, and the first section from Amroli to Anklesvar, 28¼ miles, was opened in February 1860. In January 1861 43¾ miles were opened from Baroda to the south, and before the end of the year communication between Bulsar and Baroda (123 miles) was established ; this length was not connected with Bombay until November 1864, when the Main Line to Ahmedabad may be said to have been completed.

Except on the double portions the earthwork is for a single line, the bridge piers and abutments being generally built for a double road. With the exception of a short length of Adams' rails, the double-headed rail, weighing 68lbs,

per yard, has been used throughout the Main Line, supported for the most part, on wooden sleepers; iron bowls being used in suitable places. The Wadhwan branch is laid with 60lbs. rails on iron bowl sleepers.

8. Calcutta and South Eastern.—This line extends from Calcutta to Port Canning; it was constructed under a guarantee at the time the Port Canning Company were endeavouring to divert some of the Calcutta shipping business to Canning. In consequence of the Railway having been worked at a loss since its opening (May 1863), the Company surrendered it to Government, under the provisions of their contract, on the 1st April 1868, since which date the net earnings have amounted to nearly one lakh of rupees. The line is laid with a single track throughout. There are 8 stations at an average distance of 4 miles. It is proposed to utilize the first 10 miles of this Railway to form part of a line connecting Calcutta with Diamond Harbour.

9. Patna-Gya.—This Railway connects Bankipore on the East Indian Railway with Gya; it has a single track throughout, which for the first 29 miles has been laid on an existing road with few deviations, the remainder has its own alignment. The rails weigh 60lbs. to the yard, and are supported on iron bowl sleepers.

The first 28 miles were opened in April, and the remaining 29 miles in June 1879. At the end of 1880, the interests on Capital had been more than recouped by the net earnings. There are 8 stations, at an average distance apart of 8 miles. There are proposals for extending this line to Palamow.

10. Dildarnagar-Ghazipur.—This line is being worked as a branch of the East Indian Railway.

11. Dhond-Manmad.—This is a Chord line between the two trunk lines of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway. It was constructed by the State, but is now being worked as part of the latter. There are 18 stations, being at an average distance apart of $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

12. Wardha Coal.—This Railway was constructed to carry the coal from the Warora Mines to the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, and its traffic chiefly depends on the output of coal which, owing to defects in machinery, was much restricted in 1880.

13. Sindia.—Until this year 1881 the traffic on this line has been seriously affected by the want of the bridge over the Chambal. The line now extends from Agra to Gwalior, 75 miles, and is worked as part of the East Indian Railway.

14. Punjab, Northern.—This Railway extends in a north-westerly direction from Lahore, its junction with the Sind, Punjab and Delhi Railway, to Attock on the Indus, which is to be bridged and the line carried on to Peshawar 276 miles.

There is a branch on the metre gauge from Lala Mussa, 82 miles from Lahore, to Miani on the Jhelum, constructed chiefly for the carriage of salt. A branch has also been constructed from Rawalpindi to Khusalgarh on the Indus in the direction of Kohat. This was opened to Khusalgarh in April 1881.

The line is constructed with a single track throughout.

From Lahore to Pindi, 171 miles, the rails weigh 60lbs. to the yard, and are carried on cross-sleepers, chiefly of deodar.

Beyond Pindi 62lbs. steel rails have been used. Here the gradients are very heavy, $\frac{1}{50}$ and $\frac{1}{40}$ for considerable lengths, which adds considerably to the cost of working.

The line has been opened in a very incomplete state in order to accommodate the troop traffic to and from Afghanistan, and is only now being got into working order.

15. Indus Valley.—This line unites the two portions of the Sind, Punjab and Delhi Railway. There is a junc-

tion with the Kandahar Railway at Ruk near the north bank of the Indus, 320 miles from Kurrachee, and this Railway which is open for 133 miles, is worked as a branch of the Indus Valley Railway. There is a branch from Sibi to Pir Chowki, 19 miles, almost ready for opening.

The line is laid with a single track throughout.

Excluding the branch there are 49 stations, and 7 engine stations.

There is a break in the line by the Indus at Sukkur, and communication is kept up by means of a steam ferry. The river will eventually be bridged. The rails used weigh 60lbs. to the yard, and are carried on cross-sleepers, chiefly of creosoted pine and deodar.

16 and 17. Khamgaon and Amraoti.—These short lines situated in Berar were constructed chiefly to connect the cotton-marts of the names they bear with the Great Indian Peninsula Railway. They are now worked as branches of that Railway.

18. Nizam's.—This line connects the Great Indian Peninsula Railway at a point 376 miles from Bombay in the direction of Madras with Hyderabad and is the property of the Nizam. Work was commenced about the middle of 1871, and the line was opened throughout in October 1874. There is a single track only, of which 87 miles are laid with double-headed 68lbs. rails on iron bowl sleepers, and the remainder with 60lbs. flat-footed rails on creosoted pine. There are 12 stations at average intervals of 11 miles, and 2 engine stations.

NARROW GAUGE.

1. South Indian.—This line which now has a metre gauge throughout originally consisted of several portions. The length from Negapatam to Erode, 167 miles, was commenced in May 1859, by the Great Southern India Railway

Company, and was completed on the 5-feet 6-inch gauge. The portion from Arkonam to little Conjeveram was commenced in March 1864 on the 3-feet 6-inch gauge, and in January 1868 a contract and 3 per cent. guarantee was granted to the Carnatic Railway Company for the extension to Cuddalore. In July 1874 the two undertakings were amalgamated under the title of the South Indian Railway, and the whole system is now on the metre gauge.

The earthwork and bridges are for a single way except from Negapatam to Trichinopoly, where the bridges have been built for a double road. On the section between Negapatam, the old rails weighing 68lbs. to the yard, are laid on iron and wooden sleepers, but on the greater length of the system the rails are 40·3lbs. to the yard on wooden sleepers.

There are 99 stations at average intervals of 6½ miles, and 10 engine stations.

2. Nalhati.—This short line meets the East Indian Railway at a point 145 miles from Calcutta. It was constructed on the 4-feet gauge by the Indian Branch Railway Company, and brought by the State in March 1872. It was opened for traffic in December 1863.

The line was laid on one half of a metalled road with rails weighing 32lbs. per yard.

3. Northern Bengal.—Omitting the broad gauge portion worked as part of the Eastern Bengal Railway, as noted above, this line extends from the North Bank of the Ganges to Siliguri, at the foot of the Himalayas, whence there is a Steam Tramway to Darjeeling.

There is a branch of 30 miles from Parbatipore to Kaunia on the River Teesta.

There are 30 stations on the line rather less than 8 miles apart, and 6 engine stations.

The line is constructed for a single track, but sufficient land has been taken for a second line of rails.

The first section opened consists of 134 miles between the Atrai River and Jalpiguri, and the Main Line

was completed by the opening of the Northern Section in June 1878. The road is laid with 40lbs. rails on wooden cross-sleepers, chiefly creosoted pine with a proportion of sâl and red gum.

4. Tirhoot.—With the exception of the short branch from Barh on the East Indian Railway, this line is located to the North of the Ganges. From Samastipore, 27 miles from Ganges' Bank, there is a branch to the north-west which was opened to Mozufferpore, 32 miles, in February 1877; this is now being extended to Bettiah, another 78 miles. The present Main Line continues from Samastipore to Durbhunga, 23 miles. The Durbhunga line, after having been partially opened for short periods, was finally opened for traffic in November 1875.

The line is single, and is built with 40lbs. rails on wooden cross-sleepers, chiefly deodar.

The stations average a distance of 7½ miles apart.

5. Muttra-Hathras.—This line which connects the left bank of the River Jumna, opposite to the town of Muttra, with the East Indian Railway, at a point 857 miles from Calcutta, borders and is partly laid on a metalled road. The rails weigh 30lbs. to the yard, and are laid on wooden cross-sleepers, chiefly of deodar. An extension of 24 miles from Muttra to Achnera, on the Rajputana Railway, is in course of construction. On this length heavier metals will be used.

6. Cawnpore-Farrukhabad.—This line is now open from Cawnpore on the East Indian Railway to Farrukhabad, 86 miles. The first section as far as Mirran Serai, 49 miles, was opened on the 15th December 1880.

7. Nagpur-Chattisgarh.—This line starting from the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Station at Nagpur passes through the Cantonment of Kamptee, and takes a westerly direction; it was opened to Tumsar, 53 miles, for

goods traffic in April 1880, and for passenger traffic in November. It is in contemplation to extend this line to Bilas pur, 261 miles from Nagpur, with the view of opening out the rich grain-producing districts of Chhattisgarh.

8. Rangoon and Irrawaddy Valley.—The location of this line is expressed in its name. It was opened throughout its length from Rangoon to Prome in May 1877. The stations are a little short of 7 miles apart on an average. An extension of 42 miles to Allanmyo is included in the original proposal.

9. Rajputana.—This line connects the north-west portion of the North-Western Provinces and the Punjab with Bombay *vid* Rajputana, and the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway, its northern termini being at Delhi and Agra, where there are junctions with the East Indian Railway, the junction with the Bombay and Baroda Railway being at Sabarmati near Ahmedabad. The lines from Delhi and Agra meet at Bandiqui, 134 miles from the former, and 93 from the latter. There is a junction with the Holkar and Sindia-Neemuch Railway at Ajmere, and on the completion of this line the two Railways will be probably worked as one undertaking. There is a short Salt branch to the Sambhar Lake leaving the Main Line at 184 miles from Agra. Through communication with Bombay was established on the 1st January 1881.

The line is constructed for a single track, but sufficient land has been taken for a double road. The rails weigh 36 and 40lbs. per yard, but as renewals become necessary on the Main Line, the heavier rail is to be everywhere used. The sleepers used are chiefly deodar.

The stations are on the average 8¾ miles apart, and there are 10 engine stations.

10.—Holkar and Sindia-Neemuch.—This Railway, which will shortly be opened throughout, extends from Khandwa on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway to Ajmere passing through Indore, Neemuch and Nusseerabad,

and crossing the Vindhya Range. There is a branch, 12 miles long, from Fatehabad, 25 miles from Indore to Ujjain The total length of the line will be 390 miles.

The stations are at average intervals of $8\frac{1}{5}$ miles.

The construction similar to that of the Rajputana line, except that the sleepers are chiefly of creosoted pine

11. Western Rajputana.—With the through opening of the Rajputana Railway on the 1st January 1881, this section became merged in the Main Line, and its existence as a separate Railway ceased.

13. Gaekwar of Baroda.—This line is the property of His Highness the Gaekwar of Baroda. The gauge is 2 feet 6 inches. The rails are flat-footed, weighing 30lbs. to the yard, and are spiked to wooden sleepers. The entire line is on embankment, the formation width being 10 feet. The management and working is in the hands of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway Company. The stations are at intervals of 9 miles on the average.

STATEMENT SHOWING THE LENGTHS OPEN, THE AVERAGE AGE, AND THE GENERAL RESULTS OF WORKING OF ALL INDIAN RAILWAYS FROM THE COMMENCEMENT UP TO THE END OF 1880.

[*N. B.*—The figures in this Statement have been taken from the Half-yearly Revenue Accounts. The figures relating to the Steam Boat Service have been excluded.]

Year.	Miles open at end of year.	Mean mileage open during year.	Mean age of lines at end of year.	Capital outlay at close of year.	Cost per mile open.	Gross earnings during year.	Working expenses during year.	Net profits of year.	Percentage on Capital Cost of			Gross earnings per mile per week.	REMARKS.
									Gross earnings.	Working expenses.	Net profits.		
EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.													
				Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.				Rs.	
1854	37·75	13·70	0·36	...	...	93,280	58,005	35,275	...	...	...	131	
1855	120·50	113·2	1·05	...	...	6,36,210	3,30,548	3,05,662	...	...	...	108	
1856	120·50	120·50	2·05	...	...	10,48,369	4,25,896	6,22,473	...	...	...	167	
1857	120·50	120·50	3·05	...	...	14,59,306	5,56,354	9,02,952	...	...	...	232	
1858	139·50	125·19	3·53	...	...	18,23,919	8,48,021	9,75,898	...	...	...	279	
1859	286·50	249·33	2·59	...	...	32,88,702	14,72,197	18,16,505	...	...	...	253	
1860	370·25	304·40	2·83	...	...	36,65,092	17,72,274	18,92,818	...	...	...	231	
1861	569·75	430·10	2·63	...	...	53,83,060	25,02,719	28,80 341	...	...	...	240	
1862	877·50	638·49	2·41	...	...	63,86,874	34,36.702	29,50,172	...	...	...	192	
1863	933·00	923·97	3·26	...	...	1,08.44,651	59,65,320	48.79,231	...	...	...	222	
1864	1104·00	1057·13	3·71	...	...	1,39.31,130	70,75.628	68 55,502	...	...	...	253	
2865	1127·50	1125·64	4·63	...	...	1,82,50,754	81,79.114	1,00,71,640	...	...	...	311	
1866	1127·50	1127·50	5·63	...	...	2.19.89,012	97,28.447	1.22,60.565	...	...	...	374	
1867	1353·00	1223·04	5 60	...	...	2.35.33,695	1,15,09,210	1,20.24,485	...	...	...	369	
1868	1353·00	1353·00	6·60	...	...	2,43.83,184	1,09,43,821	1.34,39.363	...	...	...	346	
1869	1353·00	1353·00	7·60	...	...	2,81,41,532	1,25 00.880	1,56,40,652	...	...	...	399	
1870	1353·00	1353·00	8·60	...	...	2,99,06.157	1.30,63,749	1,68,42.408		...	...	424	
1871	1503·25	1503·25	8·74	...	...	2.65.15,841	1,14,96,674	1.50,19,167	...	...	...	338	
1872	1503·25	1503·25	9·74		...	2,88.53,069	1,19,56,058	1,68,97,011	...	...	...	368	
1873	1503·25	1503 25	10 74	32,17,25.967	2,14,021	2,99,35,196	1,16,00,980	1.83.34,216	9·31	3·61	5·70	382	
1874	1503·25	1503·25	11·74	32,22,38,040	2.14,361	3.71,69.144	1,32,67,702	2,39,01 442	11·53	4·12	7·41	474	
1875	1503·25	1503·25	12·74	32,27,95,353	2.14,732	2.93.07,977	1.16,00,138	1,77,07,839	9·08	3·59	5·49	374	
1876	1503·25	1503·25	13·74	32,31,23,313	2.14,950	3.54.43,718	1,24.34,645	2 30,09,073	10·97	3·85	7·12	452	
1877	1503·25	1503·25	14·74	32,42 03,444	2.15,668	4.43 06.210	1,40,40,134	3,02,66,076	13·67	4·33	9·34	565	
1878	1503·25	1503·25	15·74	32.53,63,088	2,16,440	3,97.36,891	1,41,57.895	2,55,78,996	12·21	4·35	7·86	507	
1879	1504·25	1504·05	16·73	32.94,21,094	2.18.993	4.32,87,420	1,42.03,061	2.90,84,359	13·14	4·31	8·83	552	
1880	1504·25	1504·25	17·73	33,03,98.294	2,19.643	4,29,14.430	1,41,53.658	2,87,60,772	12·99	4·28	8·71	549	

Year.	Miles open at end of year.	Mean mileage open during year.	Mean age of lines at end of year.	Capital outlay at close of year.	Cost per mile open.	Gross earnings during year.	Working expenses during year.	Net profits of year.	Percentage on Capital Cost of			Gross earnings per mile per week.	REMARKS.
									Gross earnings.	Working expenses.	Net profits.		
EASTERN BENGAL RAILWAY.													
				Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs				Rs.	
1862	107·25*	19·76	0·18	...	...	96,656	53,731	42,925	...	...	...	94	* Excluding the length from Kooshtea engine-shed to old Kooshtea (¼ mile.)
1863	107·25	107·25	1·18	...	...	8,32,921	4,03,380	4,29,541	...	...	...	149	
1864	111·25	110·75	2 13	...	...	10,15,049	5,44,741	4,70,308	...	...	...	176	
1865	111 25	111·25	3·13	..	...	13,51,424	6,61,987	6,89 437	...	...	...	233	
1866	111·25	111·25	4·13	...		14 15,941	7.22.863	6,93,078	...	...	...	243	
1867	111·25	111·25	5 13	...	...	16.19,833	7.88,971	8,30.862	...	...	...	279	
1868	111·25	111·25	6·13	...	...	17,87.154	8,28.087	9.59,117	...	...	...	308	
1869	111·25	111·25	7·13	...	...	18,14,451	9,12,291	9.01,860	...	...	...	313	
1870	111·25	111·25	8 13	...	...	19,42,823	10 82,749	8,60.774	...	...	...	335	
1871	156·25	156·25	6 79	...	...	21.98,314	12,31.267	9,67.047	...	...	...	270	
1872	156·25	156·25	7·79	...	...	28 02,173	18,65,279	9 36.894	...	..	...	344	
1873	158·00	156·87	8·70	3,05,37,109	1,93,273	30.84,504	15,13.798	15 70,706	10·10	4·96	5·14	377	
1874	158·00	158 00	9·70	3.16,15.099	2,00,096	35,64,841	18,60.141	17,04.700	11·27	5 88	5·39	433	
1875	158·00	158·00	10·70	3,18,80,302	2.01.774	29,34,327	18,23 909	11,10,418	9·20	5·72	3·48	356	
1876	158 00	158 00	11·70	3,20,75,662	2,03,011	33.01,377	14.41.286	18.60 091	10·29	4 49	5·80	401	
1877	158·00	158 00	12·70	3,21 03,753	2.03.188	43,56,002	17.17,556	26.38,446	13.56	5·35	8·21	529	
1878	158·00	158·00	13·70	3.25,89,022	2,06.260	42.16,988	17,48,189	24,68,499	12 94	5·36	7·58	512	
1879	158·00	158·00	14·70	3 30,17.629	2,08.972	40,65,812	17.80,408	22.85.409	12 31	5·39	6 92	494	
1880	158·00	158·00	15·70	3,31,68,524	2,08,935	44,51,318	19,07,547	25,43 771	13 42	5·75	7·67	540	
OUDH AND ROHILKHAND RAILWAY.													
1867	42 00	29·11	0·69	...	...	1,12,166	1,19.986	−7,820	...	...	...	74	
1868	42·00	42 00	1·69	...	...	2,62,647	1.69.521	93,126	...	...	...	120	
1869	42·00	42·00	2·69	...	...	2.12.925	1,74,041	38.884	...	...	...	97	
1870	42 00	42·00	3·69	...	...	2.45,793	5,60.232	−3,14,439	...	...	...	112	
1871	42·00	42·00	4 69	...	...	2 56,144	1.77 541	78.603	...	...	...	117	
1872	293·50	144·17	1·16	...	...	4.22.760	2,89.922	1,32 838	...	...	...	56	
1873	456·50	387·51	1 59	3,02,03,680	66,164	11.23,900	8,19.458	3.04,442	3·72	2·71	1 01	56	
1874	540·50	533·00	2·33	4,64,67.380	85 971	20.04 020	12.90,826	7.13.194	4·31	2·78	1·53	72	
1875	543·75	542·01	3·31	5.07,05,050	93,251	27,51,244	16,42,745	11,08,499	5·42	3 24	2 18	97	
1876	543·75	543·75	4·31	5.29.66.230	97,409	34,11.422	21,81,020	12,30,402	6·44	4·12	2·32	120	
1877	543·75	543·75	5·31	5,42,39.610	99,751	43.41,805	22,74,205	20.67,600	8·00	4·19	3·81	153	
1878	546·75	544 25	6·28	5,50 82,280	1,00.745	46,22,037	25,06,568	21,15.469	8 39	4·55	3 84	163	
1879	546·75	546·75	7·28	5,59,73,380	1,02,375	43,44,843	25,24.907	18,19,936	7·76	4·51	3 25	153	
1880	546·75	546·75	8·28	5,77,96,380	1,05,709	44,55,150	25,50,740	19,04,410	7·71	4·41	3·30	157	

SIND, PUNJAB AND DELHI RAILWAY.

1861	109·75	70·06	0·64	...	...	2,11,207	2,05,460	5,747	...	...	...	58
1862	141·75	133·07	1·43	...	...	7,76,082	6,07,683	1,68,399	...	...	...	112
1863	141·75	141·75	2·43	...	...	12,56,851	10,43,747	2,13,104	...	...	...	171
1864	141·75	141·75	3·43	...	...	12,51,843	10,92,345	1,59,498	...	...	...	170
1865	349·75	285·36	2·21	...	...	14,93,936	12,27,676	2,66,260	...	...	...	101
1866	349·75	349·75	3·21	...	...	21,21,223	16,79,002	4,42,221	...	...	...	116
1867	403·25	373·53	3·71	...	...	23,53,895	21,07,930	2,45,965	...	...	...	121
1868	403·25	403·25	4·71	...	...	23,59,774	22,58,168	1,01,506	...	...	...	112
1869	621·25	543·35	3·93	...	...	33,04,109	26,66,257	6,37,852	...	...	...	117
1870	663·50	644·74	4·65	...	...	46,78,353	35,63,101	11,05,252	...	...	...	140
1871	663·50	663·50	5·65	...	...	42,25,118	41,56,072	39,046	...	...	...	122
1872	663·50	663·50	6·65	...	...	46,41,549	39,80,906	6,60,643	...	...	...	134
1873	663·50	663·50	7·65	9,04,02,458	1,36,251	53,16,035	36,59,505	16,65,530	5·88	4·04	1·84	154
1874	663·50	663·50	8·65	8,44,36,811	1,27,260	66,02,995	36,54,750	29,48,245	7·82	4·33	3·49	191
1875	663·50	663·50	9·65	10,36,23,458	1,56,177	55,84,702	35,78,912	20,05,850	5·39	3·45	1·94	161
1876	663·50	663·50	10·65	10,41,58,735	1,56,984	64,37,104	43,15,083	21,22,021	6·18	4·14	2·04	186
1877	663·50	663·50	11·65	10,46,37,469	1,57,705	83,37,081	45,91,305	37,45,776	7·97	4·39	3·58	241
1878	663·50	663·50	12·65	10,61,58,240	1,59,997	80,81,779	48,90,305	31,91,474	7·61	4·61	3·00	234
1879	663·50	663·50	13·65	10,89,27,371	1,64,171	1,09,65,815	60,94,732	48,71,083	10·07	5·60	4·47	317
1880	663·50	663·50	14·65	11,04,52,484	1,66,470	1,21,67,588	63,84,358	57,83,230	11·02	5·78	5·24	352

MADRAS RAILWAY.

1856	65·00	32·77	0·50	...	...	1,27,863	66,058	61,805	...	...	...	75
1857	80·50	75·15	1·34	...	...	3,58,102	1,68,762	1,89,340	...	...	...	91
1858	95·50	89·83	2·07	...	...	4,33,762	2,40,889	1,92,873	...	...	...	93
1859	95·50	95·50	3·07	...	...	6,06,769	3,66,155	2,40,614	...	...	...	122
1860	136·50	129·51	3·10	...	...	7,91,500	5,81,760	2,09,740	...	...	...	117
1861	296·50	241·89	2·24	...	...	11,45,172	8,13,998	3,31,174	...	...	...	91
1862	446·75	392·79	2·37	...	...	17,16,671	12,70,751	4,45,920	...	...	...	84
1863	446·75	446·75	3·37	...	...	25,53,504	17,50,964	8,02,540	...	...	...	110
1864	569·50	491·81	3·51	...	...	34,09,057	16,91,491	17,17,566	...	...	...	133
1865	609·00	582·70	4·24	...	...	44,18,249	20,18,527	23,99,433	...	...	...	145
1866	643·25	623·36	4·96	...	...	47,80,942	21,81,509	25,99,433	...	...	...	147
1867	643·25	643·25	5·96	...	...	51,38,099	22,23,125	29,14,974	...	...	...	153
1868	675·75	654·11	6·64	...	...	61,76,100	25,62,820	36,13,280	...	...	...	181
1869	705·50	688·22	7·32	...	...	61,37,801	30,17,661	31,20,140	...	...	...	171
1870	781·50	709·66	7·52	...	...	53,80,501	28,33,123	25,47,478	...	...	...	146
1871	830·00	823·62	8·07	...	...	59,90,455	30,17,093	29,19,362	...	...	...	139
1872	830·00	830·00	9·07	...	...	62,05,653	32,38,962	29,66,691	...	...	...	149
1873	858·00	842·49	9·76	10,52,09,935	1,22,622	68,83,350	39,19,378	29,63,972	6·54	3·72	2·82	157
1874	858·00	858·00	10·76	10,59,29,106	1,23,046	59,06,500	38,19,533	20,86,967	5·57	3·60	1·97	132
1875	858·00	858·00	11·76	10,63,19,302	1,23,915	64,29,752	45,18,602	19,11,150	6·05	4·25	1·80	144
1876	858·00	858·00	12·76	10,66,82,346	1,24,338	71,13,773	45,79,778	25,33,995	6·67	4·29	2·38	159
1877	858·00	858·00	13·76	10,87,19,585	1,26,713	1,00,35,295	59,47,403	40,87,892	9·23	5·47	3·76	225
1878	858·00	858·00	14·76	10,99,50,654	1,28,158	66,30,174	50,42,194	15,87,980	6·03	4·59	1·44	148
1879	858·00	858·00	15·76	11,05,95,550	1,28,899	66,26,486	45,51,316	20,75,170	5·99	4·11	1·88	148
1880	858·00	858·00	16·76	11,08,55,385	1,29,202	61,62,545	42,05,409	19,57,136	5·56	3·79	1·77	138

Year.	Miles open at end of year.	Mean mileage open during year.	Mean age of lines at end of year.	Capital outlay at close of year.	Cost per mile open.	Gross earnings during year.	Working expenses during year.	Net profits of year.	Percentage on Capital cost of			Gross earnings per mile per week.	REMARKS.
									Gross earnings.	Working expenses.	Net profits.		
SOUTH INDIAN RAILWAY.													
				Rs,	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.				Rs.	
1861	48·25	9·53	0·20	...	...	37,871	17,969	19,902	...	...	...	77	
1862	81·75	75·42	1·04	...	...	2,38,607	1,06 033	1,33,574	...	...	...	61	
1863	81·75	81·75	2·04	...	...	3.13,899	1.40 001	1,73.898	...	...	...	74	
1864	81·75	81·75	3·04	...	...	2,95,279	1,69,929	1,25,350	...	..	...	69	
1865	99·25	93·16	3 45	...	...	3.84,396	1 90,381	1.94.015	...	...	...	79	
1866	143·75	102·79	3·10	...	..	5.71,677	2.81,709	2.89.968	...	...	...	106	
1867	160·50	152·19	3·72	...	...	6.85.132	3,40.264	3.44.868	...	...	...	86	
1868	184·00	182 00	4·24	...	...	8.46,331	4.11,646	4,34.685	...	...	...	90	
1869	184·00	184·00	5·24	...	...	8,13,028	5,23,940	2,89,088	...	...	...	84	
1870	184·00	184 00	6·24	...	...	8,09,549	5,05.148	3,04.401	...	...	...	84	
1871	184·00	184·00	7·24	...	...	8.13,882	4.52.563	3,61,319	..	...	...	84	
1872	184·00	184·00	8·24	...	...	8 42,022	4.78,872	3.63.150	...	...	...	87	
1873	184·00	184·00	9·24	1,53,11,600	82.426	11,53,212	5,76,462	5.76,750	7·53	3·76	3 77	120	
1874	184·00	184·00	10·24	1.53.21,663	82,182	9,69.746	5,8 ,679	3,80,067	6 33	3·85	2·48	101	
1875	280·00	216·09	7·36	2,06,96,170	73.593	10,78,481	5.19.400	5,59,087	5·23	2·52	2·71	96	
1876	472·75	422·15	5·25	3,13 68,386	68.468	19.90,800	10,60.522	9,30,278	6·35	3 35	3 00	90	
1877	598·00	577·98	5·12	3.71,85,036	62,182	32,33.246	16.45.026	15,88,220	8·69	4·42	4·27	107	
1878	610·75	605·70	6·00	3.87.44,014	63,437	32,33,139	21.55,052	10,78,107	8 34	5·56	2·78	102	
1879	631·50	613·73	6·77	4,09.0 ,593	64.762	33,62,067	22,98.815	10,63,252	8·22	5 62	2 60	105	
1880	645·25	637·26	7.61	4,16,72,963	64,584	35.59.564	26,29,576	9,30,018	8·54	6·31	2·23	106	
GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.													
1853	20·50	14·49	0 17	...	...	89,643	41,144	48,490	...	...	...	119	
1854	33·25	29·06	1·31	...	...	1,38,220	84,045	54,175	...	...	...	88	
1855	49·50	37·35	3·63	...	...	1,76.560	1,23.971	52,589	...	...	...	89	
1856	87·25	73·70	1·77	...	...	4,33,602	1,82,862	2,50.740	...	...	...	113	
1857	87·25	87·25	2·77	...	...	7,25,215	3.28,272	3,96.943	...	...	...	158	
1858	193·50	113·37	1·83	...	...	11,24.249	4,74,278	6.49.971	...	...	...	173	
1859	244·25	203·23	2·28	...	...	18.28,528	9,35,971	8,92,557	...	...	...	172	
1860	297·00	286·29	2·84	...	...	21,43,571	13.06.892	8,36,679	...	...	...	144	
1861	437·75	370·16	2·78	...	...	26,78,873	20,45,332	6,35,541	...	...	...	139	
1862	495·00	451·40	3·37	...	...	34,95 590	21,68,018	13,27,572	...	...	...	149	
1863	555·00	532·37	3·96	...	...	48.24,152	32,58,899	15.65,253	...	...	...	175	
1864	587·50	561 14	4·70	...	...	69.61,996	50,17.777	19.44,219	...	...	...	119	
1865	703·75	603·72	4·76	...	...	1,29,56,625	77,14,871	52,41,754	...	...	...	414	
1866	*817·75	735·16	5·12	...	...	1,36,97,154	79,53.801	57.43,353	...	...	...	357	* Excludes Mohpani Branch.
1867	854·50	843·21	5·86	...	...	1,62.18.683	90,32,796	71.25.887	...	...	...	386	

1868	875·50	872·79	6·72	...	...	1,61,45,882	66,79,215	61,66,667	...	...	..	357	
1869	875·50	875·50	7·72	...	...	1,58,01,210	1,05,53,746	52,47,464	...	...	...	348	
1870	1260·50	1162 74	6·28	...	..	1,81,28,937	1,12,85,474	68,43,463	...	...	...	300	
1871	1275·75	1270·74	7·20	...	...	2,02,47,045	1,27,62,671	74,84,374	...	...	...	307	
1872	1276·75	†1275·75	8·20	...	...	1,87,28,265	1,20,32,009	66,96,256	...	...	...	284	† Excluding Mohpani Branch.
1873	1276·75	1275·75	9·20	23,62,39,190	1,85,176	1,88,51,120	1,20,81,127	67,69,993	7·98	5·11	2·87	284	
1874	1275·75	1275·75	10·20	23,67,57,570	1,85,583	2,01,65,973	1,19,32,583	82,33,390	8·54	5·04	3·48	303	
1875	1275·75	1275·75	11·20	23.80,65,870	1,83,668	2,15,24,577	1,01,75,859	1,13,48,718	9·04	4·27	4·77	324	
1876	1275·75	1275 75	12·20	23,97,99,600	1.66.967	2,45,35,413	1,16 77,891	1,28,57,522	10·23	4·87	5·36	369	
1877	1275·75	1275·75	13·20	24,15,85,669	1,89,367	3 27,74.151	1.58,28.683	1,69,45,468	13·57	6·56	7·01	492	
1878	1275·75	1275·75	14·20	24,63,02 172	1,93,064	2,83.64,911	1,38,73,563	1,44,91,248	11·51	5 63	5·88	429	
1879	1275·75	1275·75	15·20	24,85.83,445	1.94,853	2,52,48,315	1,50,57,714	1,01,90,601	10·16	6·06	4·10	383	
1880	1275·75	1275·75	16·20	24,99,77,200	1,95,945	2,49,53,253	1,38,47,702	1,11,05,551	9·98	5·54	4·44	372	

BOMBAY, BARODA AND CENTRAL INDIA RAILWAY.

1860	35·00	26·00	0·74	...	...	66,349	46.559	19,790	...	...	...	49	
1861	134·00	106·51	0·98	...	...	4,06.854	2,23,659	1,83,215	...	...	...	73	
1862	167·25	144·93	1·65	...	...	7,06,723	3.54,370	3,52,353	...	...	...	94	
1863	185·00	184·03	2·40	...	...	13,73,292	6,79.869	6,93,423	...	...	...	138	
1864	305·75	196·25	2·05	...	...	15.95,503	13,61,402	2,34,101	...	..	...	156	
1865	305·75	305·75	3·05	...	...	35,62,142	22,73,827	12,88,314	...	...	...	223	
1866	305·75	305·75	4·06	...	...	44,47.505	31,98,915	12,48,590	...	...	...	278	
1867	305·75	305·75	5·06	...	...	46,36,910	30.86.175	15,50.735	...	...	...	291	
1868	305·75	305·75	6 04	...	...	45.78,698	33,72,675	12,06.023	...	...	...	287	
1869	307·50	307·15	7·02	...	...	49,20 186	36.56.821	12,63.365	...	...	...	307	
1870	312·50	312·41	7·91	...	...	53.79,250	32.56,664	21,22,586	...	...	...	327	
1871	349 75	323·31	8 00	...	...	54,74.096	32,67,071	22,07,025	...	...	...	300	
1872	389·25	373·67	8·15	...	...	56,49,316	33,87,867	22,61.449	...	...		290	‡ Includes Patri Branch.
1873	‡411·75	403 67	8·69	7,96,85,433	1,92,071	55,89.798	33,10,942	22,78,856	7·07	4·19	2·88	260	
1874	428·50	424·05	9·34	8,10,04,047	1,89,041	58,58,414	30,53,218	28.05,196	7·23	3·77	3·46	265	
1875	430·25	430·23	10 30	8,13,99,633	1.89.191	63,86,783	34,75,021	29,11,762	7·84	4·27	3·57	285	
1876	439·25	430·89	11·07	8,14,56,207	1,85,467	67,72,292	37.07,006	30.65,286	8·31	4·55	3 76	296	
1877	444·00	443·63	11 94	8,22,35,127	1.85,214	77,98,912	32,73,204	45,25,708	9 48	3·98	5·50	345	
1878	444·00	444·00	12·94	8,22,31,760	1,85,207	69,04,950	32,09,550	36,95,400	8·40	3·91	4·49	298	
1879	444·00	444·00	13·94	8,30,57,040	1,87,065	71,52,573	33,56.576	37,95,997	8·61	4·04	4·57	309	
1880	444·00	444·00	14·94	8,28,42,480	1,86,582	82,44,375	35,08,452	47,35,923	9·95	4·23	5·72	355	

CALCUTTA AND SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY.

1862	15·00	14·96	1·00	...	...	27.780	35,668	—7,888	...	...	...	36	
1863	28·00	23·23	1·36	...	...	47,328	62,032	—14,704	...	...	...	38	
1864	28·00	28·00	2·36	...	...	77,332	1,05,971	—28,639	...	...	...	53	
1865	28·00	28 00	3·36	...	...	1,08,952	1,24.552	—15,600	...	..	...	75	
1866	28·00	28·00	4·36	...	...	1,15,293	1,36,731	—21,438	...	...	...	79	
1867	28·00	28·00	5·36	...	...	92,920	1,24,198	—31,278	...	...	...	64	

Year.	Miles open at end of year.	Mean mileage open during year.	Mean age of lines at end of year.	Capital outlay at close of year.	Cost per mile open.	Gross earnings during year.	Working expenses during year.	Net profits of year.	Per centage on Capital cost of			Gross earnings per mile per week.	REMARKS.
									Gross earnings.	Working expenses.	Net profits.		
CALCUTTA AND SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY.—(*Continued*).													
				Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.					
1868	28·00	28 00	6·36	...	...	87,878	1,52,131	—64,253	...	...	...	60	
1869	28·00	28·00	7·36	...	...	80,786	1,17,579	—36,793	...	...	...	55	
1870	28 00	28·00	8·36	...	...	98 844	1.03,670	—4.826	...	...	...	55	
1871	28·00	28·00	9·36	...	...	79,308	72,027	7.281	...	...	...	40	
1872	28·00	28·00	10·36	...	...	58,711	54,057	4,654	...	...	...	40	
1873	28·00	28·00	11·36	73,21,970	2,61,499	1,02,072	1,04,687	—2,615	1·39	1·43	—0·04	70	
1874	28·00	28·00	12·36	73,08,800	2,61,499	99,489	77.945	21,544	1·36	1·07	0·29	68	
1875	28·00	28·00	13·36	69,07,090	2,46,682	1,03,660	83 429	2·,231	1·50	1·21	0·29	71	
1876	28·00	28·00	14·36	69,01,150	2,46 470	98.343	1,06,824	—8,481	1·43	1·55	—0·12	68	
1877	28·00	28·00	15·36	69,01,160	2,46,470	1.18.487	96,847	21,640	1·72	1·40	0·31	79	
1878	28·00	28·00	16·36	69,01,160	2,46,470	1.25,694	94,372	31,322	1·82	1·37	0·45	83	
1879	28·00	28·00	17·36	66,39,840	2,37,137	1,34,087	89,088	44,999	2 02	1·34	0·68	92	
1880	28·00	28·00	18·36	66,39,843	2,37,137	1,42,098	1,01,344	40,754	2·14	1·53	0.61	98	
NALHATI RAILWAY.													
1864	27·25	27·25	1·03	...		52,086*	25,460*	26,626*	...	...	...	36	* From 21st December 1863 to 31st December 1864.
1865	27·25	27 25	2·03	...	...	57,567	36.392	21,115	...	...	...	41	
1866	27·25	27·25	3·03	...	...	52,102	54,787	—2.685	...	...	...	36	
1867	27·25	27·25	4·03	...	...	63,118	43,432	19.686	...	...	...	45	
1868	27·25	27·25	5·03	...	...	81,365	68,024	13,341	...	...	...	57	
1869	27·25	27·25	6·03	...	...	84,595	50,454	34,141	...	...	...	60	
1870	27·25	27·25	7·03	...	...	86.271	42,077	44,194	...	...	...	60	
1871	27·25	27·25	8·03	...	...	77,875	45.219	32 656	..	...	...	55	
1872	27·25	27·25	9·03	...	...	56,447	32,252	24,195	...	...	...	53	
1873	27·25	27·25	10·03	3,00,000	11,009	84,453	50.724	33,729	28·15	16 91	11·24	60	
1874	27·25	27 25	11·03	2,73,170	10,024	85,122	57,220	27,902	31·16	20 95	10·21	61	
1875	27 25	27·25	12 03	2 71,690	9,970	80.098	61,144	18.954	29·48	22·50	6·98	57	
1876	27·25	27·25	13·03	2,71,690	9,976	75.199	83.585	—8.386	27·68	30·76	—3·08	54	
1877	27·25	27·25	14·03	2,71,690	9,970	89,454	89,875	—421	32 92	33·08	—0.16	64	
1878	27·25	27·25	15·03	2,87,610	10,554	90,261	71,677	18,584	31·38	24·92	6·46	64	
1879	27·25	27·25	16·03	3,17,080	11,634	91,779	62,009	29,770	28·95	19·56	9·39	65	
1880	27·25	27·25	17·03	3,25,210	11,934	69,925	73,653	—3,728	21·50	22·65	—1·15	49	
NORTHERN BENGAL RAILWAY.													
1877	134 25	46·34	0·34	1,28,04,740	95,558	48.717	68,347	—19,630	0·38	0·53	0·15	20	
1878	232 50	210·12	1·10	1,68,95,580	77,149	8,87,471	6,30,642	2,56,829	5·25	3·73	1·52	81	

1879	243·50	238·94	2·03	1,76,12,060	76,243	12,52,311	11,51,317	1,00,994	7·11	6·54	0·53	101
1880	243·50	243·50	3·03	1,96,73,726	80,796	14,49,296	8,54,386	5,94,910	7·36	4 34	3·02	114

TIRHOOT RAILWAY.

1875	43·00	7·19	0·16	16,64,126	38,723	14,830	15,960	—1,130	0·89	0·96	—0·07	39
1876	43·00	43·00	1·16	23,33,401	54,265	1.79,414	1,23,196	56,218	7·69	5·28	2·41	71
1877	78·00	70·69	1·55	44,48,248	57,029	2,83,922	1,93,620	90,302	6 38	4·35	2·03	77
1878	78·00	78·17	2·51	48,87,801	62 664	4,41,308	3,32.500	1.08,808	9·03	6·80	2·23	108
1879	85·00	78·00	3·55	49,99,086	58,813	4.58,736	3,56,914	1,07,819	9·18	7·02	2·16	113
1880	85·00	85·00	4·55	51,51,330	62,821	4,52,924	2,62,199	1,90,725	8·79	5·09	3·70	102

PATNA AND GYA RAILWAY.

1879	57·00	36·49	0·64	28,45,078	49,914	2,30,510	1,28,723	1,01.787	8·10	4·52	3·58	121
1880	57·00	57·00	1·64	82,20,951	56,508	4,81,556	2,70,300	2,11,256	14·95	8·99	6·56	162

MUTTRA-HATHRAS RAILWAY.

1875	29·00	5·88	0·20	9,55,863	32.961	33,151	19.287	13.864	3·47	2·02	1·45	108
1876	89·00	29·00	1·20	9,21,560	31.778	83,406	48,159	35,247	9·05	5·23	3·82	55
1877	29·00	29·00	2·20	9,91.590	34,193	98,900	53.689	45.211	9·98	5·42	4 56	66
1878	29·00	29·00	3·20	9,93,600	34,262	98,308	52,431	45,877	9 89	5·27	4·62	65
1879	29·00	29·00	4·20	10,34.720	35,680	1.25,930	69,222	56 708	12 17	6·69	5·48	83
1880	29·00	29·00	5·20	10,83.160	37,523	1,35,226	77,556	57,670	12·43	7·13	5·30	89

CAWNPORE-FARRUKHABAD RAILWAY.

1880	49·25	2·29	0·05	27,08,089	54,987	2.202	5,134	—2,932	0·08	0·19	—0·11	18

DILDARNAGAR-GHAZIPUR RAILWAY.

1880	12·00	2·89	0 24	5,63,297	46,941	8,351	10,717	—2,366	1·48	1·90	—0·42	56

RAJPUTANA RAILWAY.

1873	91·75	64·47	0·70	...	...	1,08,717	1.05,011	3,706	...	...	...	32
1874	291·75	171·30	0·80	1,32.70,992	45,488	6,18,314	4,96,548	1,21,766	4·66	3·74	0·92	69
1875	378·75	344·36	1·53	2,12,63,580	56.141	17,46,960	11,18,692	6,28,268	8·22	5·26	2 96	98
1876	399·00	393·90	2·44	2,38,46.230	60,016	23,29,592	15,23,623	8,05,969	9 77	6·39	3·38	114
1877	399·00	399·00	3·44	2,53,82.400	63,615	26,96,687	18,33,367	8,63,320	10·62	7·22	3·40	130
1878	431·25	419·41	4·16	2,83.46,980	66,128	29.72,601	18,42.130	11,30 471	10·49	6·50	3·99	136
1879	465·50	438·47	4·80	3,09,43,568	66,474	36,45,420	23.66,253	11,79.167	11·46	7·65	3·81	153
1880	489·50	470·30	5·52	3,40,61,947	69,585	37,23,719	24 90,414	12,33 305	10·93	7·31	3·62	152

HOLKAR AND SINDIA-NEEMUCH RAILWAY.

1874	37·00	33·21	0·90	15.80,158	42.707	1,03,364	86 844	16,520	6·54	5·50	1·04	60
1875	57·25	56·20	1·56	48,74,640	85,147	3,59,320	3,29,524	29,796	7·37	6·76	0·61	123

Year.	Miles open at end of year.	Mean mileage open during year.	Mean age of lines at end of year.	Capital outlay at close of year.	Cost per mile open.	Gross earnings during year.	Working expenses during year.	Net profits of year.	Percentage on Capital cost of			Gross earnings per mile per week.	Remarks.
									Gross earnings.	Working expenses.	Net profits		
HOLKAR AND SINDIA-NEEMUCH RAILWAY—(*continued.*)													
				Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.				Rs.	
1876	107·50	78·04	1·56	1,07,87,850	1,00,352	4,01,101	3,72,490	28,611	3·72	3·45	0·27	99	
1877	107·50	107·50	2·56	1,14,38,860	1,06,408	4,80,128	3,69,047	1,11,081	4·19	3·22	0·97	86	
1878	171·75	146·24	2·45	1,95,98,320	1,14,109	9,29,045	6,27,128	3,01,917	4·74	3·20	1·54	122	
1879	171·75	171·75	3·45	2,00,13,725	1,16,528	11,45,837	8,54,009	2,91,828	5·72	4·27	1·45	128	
1880	25·450	227·71	3·22	2,53,37,858	99,559	14,01,259	10,47,268	3,53,991	5·53	4·13	1·40	118	
PATRI BRANCH.													
1873													
1874													
1875													
1876	...	Worked by Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway.											
1877													
1878													
1879													
1880													
DHOND-MANMAD.													
1878	145·75	108·03	0·74	71,17,400	48,833	1,35,254	1,77,195	—41,941	1·90	2·49	—0·59	24	
1879	145·75	145·75	1·74	95,43,500	65,478	4,67,557	4,95,222	—27,665	4·90	5·19	—0·29	62	
1880	145·75	145·75	2·74	1,04,58,463	71,756	6,95,094	6,06,875	88,219	6·65	5·80	0·85	91	
WARDHA COAL RAILWAY.													
1874	18·50	16·96	0·91	12,57,886	67,994	21,023	22,064	—1,041	16·71	17·54	—0·83	23	
1875	18·50	18·50	1·91	12,67,270	68,501	29,316	31,274	—1,958	2·31	2·46	—0·15	31	
1876	18·50	18·50	2·91	12,66,152	68,440	21,836	25,536	—3,700	1·72	2·02	—0·30	23	
1877	46·50	23·70	1·66	45,99,379	98,911	79,087	55,555	23,532	1·72	1·21	0·51	67	
1878	46·50	46·50	2·66	47,73,695	1,02,669	1,30,399	1,22,372	8,027	2·73	2·56	0·17	54	
1879	46·50	46·60	3·66	47,99,450	1,03,214	1,65,168	1,34,833	30,325	3·44	2·81	0·63	69	
1880	46·50	46·50	4·66	56,15,804	1,20,769	1,55,900	2,38,376	—82,476	2·78	4·25	—1·47	65	
NAGPORE AND CHHATTISGARH RAILWAY.													
1880	53·00	39·21	0·74	30,37,689	57,315	8,03,952	2,681	21,271	3·42	2·72	0·70	51	

RANGOON AND IRRAWADDY VALLEY RAILWAY.

1877	161·00	108·07	0·67	88,39,650	54,935	3,44,452	4,45,584	—1,01,132	3·90	5·01	—1·14		61
1878	161·00	161·00	1·67	1,12,12,847	69,645	9,62,969	8,95,812	67,157	8·59	7·99	0·60		115
1879	161·00	161·00	2·67	1,18,94,894	73,881	9,55,918	8,14,175	1,41,743	8·04	6·85	1·90		114
1880	161·00	161·00	3·67	1,23,07,244	76,443	13,22,710	8,01,626	5,21,084	10·74	6·51	4·23		158

SINDIA RAILWAY.

1878	34·00	33·16	0·95	42,42,416	1,24,777	93,911	1,25,186	—31,275	2·21	2·95	—0·74		51
1879	66·50	44·68	1·15	73,20,207	1,10,078	91,916	1,22,688	—31,772	1·24	1·68	—0·44		39
1880	66·50	66·50	2·15	81,51,903	1,22,585	2,01,824	1,77,714	24,110	2·48	2·18	0·30		58

PUNJAB NORTHERN RAILWAY.

1875	62·00	44·84	0·72	54,06,934	87,209	1,42,788	90,543	52,245	2·64	1·68	0·96		61
1876	103·25	99·8	1·31	1,79,57,838	1,73,926	4,75,946	3,67,778	1,08,168	2·65	2·05	0·60		101
1877	103·25	103·25	2·31	1,70,25,460	1,64,895	6,96,761	6,04,879	91,882	4·09	3·55	0·54		130
1878	103·25	103·25	3·31	1,73,4[illegible],018	1,67,942	9,09,571	9,03,761	5,810	5·24	5·21	0·03		169
1879	103·25	103·25	4·31	2,44,98,832	2,37,228	18,50,081	14,71,192	3,78,889	7·55	6·01	1·54		345
1880	224·75	180·12	2·78	4,04,37,319	1,79,921	33,68,284	28,04,113	5,64,171	8·33	6·93	1·40		360

INDUS VALLEY AND KANDAHAR RAILWAYS.

1878	501·00	188·57	0·37	5,12,48,691	1,02,293	5,72,109	7,03,550	—1,31,441	1·12	1·38	-0·26		56
1879	501·00	501·00	1·37	5,70,95,291	1,13,963	31,96,816	25,69,458	6,26,898	5·60	4·59	1·10		121
1880	653·00	594·18	1·96	6,92,82,608	1,06,099	64,72,659	45,38,397	19,34,262	9·34	6·55	2·79		209

WESTERN RAJPUTANA RAILWAY.

1879	82·63	10·50	0·13	...	...	47,810	41,056	6,754	...	...	...		86
1880	82·63	82·63	1·13	63,17,255	76,452	6,50,103	5,57,724	92,379	10·29	8·83	1·46		151

GAEKWAR OF BARODA'S RAILWAY.

1873	20·00	14·68	0·73	...	...	15,758	15,497	261	...	...	...		21
1874	20·00	20·00	1·73	4,00,000*	20,000	33,087	25,074	8,013	8·27	6·27	2·00		32
1875	20·00	20·00	2·73	4,00,000*	20,000	34,302	26,965	7,337	8·57	6·74	1·83		33
1876	20·00	20·00	3·73	4,00,000*	20,000	39,776	29,971	9,805	9·94	7·49	2·45		38
1877	20·00	20·00	4·73	3,82,500	19,125	46,400	36,285	10,115	12·13	9·49	2·64		45
1878	20·00	20·00	5·73	3,82,500	19,125	44,891	28,022	16,869	11·74	7·33	4·41		43
1879	40·25	30·65	3·61	6,67,687	16,588	72,083	40,474	31,609	10·80	6·07	4·73		46
1880	57·75	49·07	3·37	11,44,210	19,813	1,28,824	63,687	65,137	11·26	5·57	5·69		51

* Approximate.

Year.	Miles open at end of year.	Mean mileage open during year.	Mean age of lines at end of year.	Capital outlay at close of year.	Cost per mile open.	Gross earnings during year.	Working expenses during year.	Net profits of year.	Percentage on Capital cost of			Gross earnings per mile per week.	REMARKS.
									Gross earnings.	Working expenses.	Net profits.		
KHAMGAON RAILWAY.													
				Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.				Rs.	
1870	8·00	6·64	0·83	...	...	10,713	19,957	—9,244	...	...	...	31	Opened for traffic on 4th March 1870.
1871	8·00	8·00	1·83	...	...	23,306	20,718	2 588	...	...	...	56	
1872	8·00	8·00	2·83	...	...	12,910	8,989	3,921	...	...	...	31	
1873	8·00	8·00	3·83	4,85,054	60.632	18,147	16,094	2,053	3·74	3·32	0·42	81	
1874	8·00	8·00	4·83	4,85,054	60.632	28 517	15,011	13.506	5·88	3·09	2 79	127	
1875	8·00	8·00	5·83	4,44,630	55,579	40,318	27,640	12,678	9·07	6·22	2 85	174	
1876	8·00	8 00	6·83	4,44,630	55.579	32,274	23,376	8,898	7·26	5·26	2 00	132	
1877	8·00	8·00	7·83	4,85,054	60.632	50,990	31,473	19,517	10·51	6·49	4·02	154	
1878	8·00	8·00	8 83	4.71,140	58,892	52,991	21,539	31,452	11·25	4 57	6 68	191	
1879	8·00	8·00	9·83	5,23,328	65 416	38,086	38.350	—264	7·28	7·33	—0 05	146	
1880	8·00	8·00	10·83	5,08,187	63.523	27.363	23 106	4,257	5.38	4·55	0·83	98	
AMRAOTI.													
1871	6·00	5 24	0·87	...	...	19,085	13,956	5,129	...	...	...	74	Opened for traffic on 6th February 1871.
1872	6·00	6·00	1·87	...	...	23.025	20.268	2,757	...	...	...	70	
1873	6·00	6·00	2·87	4,37,278	72.880	24,124	27.745	—3.621	5 52	6 34	-0·82	77	
1874	6·00	6·00	3·87	4,37,278	72.880	31.615	30.434	1,181	7 23	6 69	0·27	101	
1875	6 00	6·00	4·87	4,00,840	66.807	58,106	45.039	13,067	14·49	11·23	3·26	186	
1876	6·00	6·00	5·87	4,37,278	72.880	69 166	48,863	20,303	15 82	11·17	4·65	212	
1877	6·00	6 00	6 87	4.37,278	72,880	80,092	27.383	52,709	18 31	6·26	12·05	257	
1878	6·00	6 00	7·87	4.25.848	70.975	89.124	58,980	50,144	20·92	9·15	11·77	286	
1879	6·00	6·00	8·87	4.65,695	77,617	69,904	53,728	16,176	15·01	11·54	3·47	224	
1880	6·00	6·00	9·87	4,34,261	72,377	50,865	47,226	3,639	11·71	10·87	0 84	163	
NIZAM'S RAILWAY.													
1874	121·00	27·85	0 23	99.32,120	82.084	1,15.230	1.09,482	5,748	1·16	1·10	0·06	79	
1875	121 00	121·00	1 23	1 03,75,760	85,750	4.96 519	5.63,904	—67,385	4 79	5·44	—0·65	79	
1876	121·00	121·00	2·23	1,06 .8,010	87,793	5,81.738	4,98,674	83.064	5·48	4·69	0 79	9	
1877	121·00	121·00	3·23	1,15,06,385	95.094	8,30.768	6,44,081	1.86,687	7·22	5·60	1·62	132	
1878	121 00	121·00	4 23	1,14,59,384	94.706	7.91,753	6,79,907	1,11.846	6·91	5·93	0·98	126	
1879	121·00	121 00	5 23	1.16,10.466	95.954	6,94,401	6,04,476	89,925	5·98	5·21	0·77	110	
1880	121·00	121·00	6·23	1.20.62.228	99.688	7.02.716	4,78.407	2,24,309	5·83	3 97	1·86	112	

THE BRITISH AND INTER-COLONIAL TRADE TARIFF UNION.

The proceedings in connection with the Conference of Delegates representing the Colonies and Dependencies of Great Britain, the City of London, and various other commercial Associations interested in the movement initiated by the Dominion Board of Trade—as recorded in the Chamber's Report for the 31st October 1880—were held in the early part of this year.

The Committee are indebted to the courtesy of Mr. Stephen Ralli for a pamphlet containing those proceedings which are too voluminous for incorporation in this report, but the opinions expressed by the Delegates from the Bengal and Bombay Chambers, and the replies given by the Secretaries of State for the Colonies and India to a Deputation, are here reproduced for the information of members.

MR. MOWAT, late member of the Legislative Council of Bombay, and ex-President of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, said:—The object of this meeting being reciprocity between Great Britain and her colonies I, as the delegate from the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, am opposed to such a proposal. I oppose it because it would reverse the present fiscal policy of England, and

with regard to her great dependency, India, I need hardly say that any reversal of that policy would be fatal to the best interests of both countries. England, no doubt, allows those colonies who have responsible Governments to make tariffs of their own, but as India is governed in a different and more absolute manner, no Secretary of State would sanction fiscal privileges at variance with those of the mother country. But let us look at those colonies which are working under protective tariffs and those which have adopted free-trade principles, and I make bold to say that the free-trade colonies are the most successful. We have an illustration of this in New South Wales. A previous speaker laid stress on the trade balance between England and the United States being much in favor of the latter. This is due to large importations of food grains and raw cotton. But if we pay six-pence or eight-pence per lb. for cotton to the United States, and send it out in a manufactured form to India or China at one shilling or fourteen pence, we are surely gainers. In dealing with a great question of this kind, you must not take the balance as between England and one country, but the trade of the nation as a whole. If you do this you will find that we benefit by our importations from America, otherwise they would not be made. The importations into India are chiefly from Great Britain, those from foreign countries being small in comparison. Since the opening of the Suez Canal the exports from India to the Continent have greatly increased, and I think that to attempt to reverse the present policy would be a fatal and suicidal step. I believe in the continuance of that free-trade policy which has made England what she is: wherever she competes with other nations on equal terms, she

is the first in the race of competition. Those being my views, I mean to vote against the resolution which has just been proposed.

MR. RALLI: As a delegate of the Chamber of Commerce of Calcutta I beg to support the opinion of my brother delegate of Bombay. We delegates of the Chambers of Commerce of India do not represent only the trade interest of India but also the interest of the large masses of the Indian people. As you are aware, those people are poor, and their evident interest is that they should be able to buy the goods which are imported at the lowest prices possible, and be able to sell the produce of India and her manufacturers at as good prices as it is possible to get. It is to the interest, therefore, of India that she should have free-trade without restriction, and free-trade as understood by Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright, of whom we, the delegates of India, are the disciples. What is the import trade of India with those countries where there is protection, or where there is partial protection, and what is the import trade in India from those countries? I am going to say a few words on this subject to show you that a retaliatory policy would be most disadvantageous to India. I will speak first of the export trade from France to India, and then of the import trade into France from India. What do we import from France into India? A few silk articles, and some wines and spirits. Whereas the import trade from France to India is quite unimportant, the export trade from India to France is very considerable indeed. What are the articles which we export to France from India? Since the opening of the Suez Canal we merchants in India have been able to compete in France

with America and Russia. We export to France a very large quantity of Indian wheat, seeds and cotton, and if the ideas of the promoters of this meeting were approved by the delegates of India and put into force, and if the Indian Government allowed what you require to be done against France, what would be the result? The result would be this, that France would retaliate, and we should have also differential duties in France against our Indian wheat, cotton and seeds, whereas now we import them from India, through the Suez Canal, at a cheaper cost than they can be imported into Marseilles from America and Russia. I may say the same about Indian cotton. We import now large quantities of Indian cotton into Marseilles and Havre. Supposing there were differential duties in India against French goods, a differential duty would be put on against our cotton, and French manufacturers, instead of Indian cotton, would use American cotton. As regards linseed we export large quantities, and as large quantities are grown in the South of Russia, if a differential duty was imposed in France on Indian seeds, we should lose our trade, and we should be supplanted by the Russian merchants; and the same may be said with regard to rapeseed, which we import largely. We should be supplanted in that trade by Russia and Roumania. It is evident that, as regards our increasing trade from India to France, this trade is benefitted by the present policy, and that it is not in the interest of India to levy heavier duties on the goods coming from protectionist countries like France, than on the same goods coming from free-trade countries. With regard to the trade between India and America, it is gradually increasing year by year. Jute cuttings, which are very little used in England, are largely

used in America for paper making, and the moment you put in India a differential duty on goods exported from America to India, America will put an increased duty on jute cuttings, and what would be the result? Why, the paper mills of America would use Esparto grass from Spain and Africa, instead of using our jute cuttings. Besides which our gunny trade between India and America would be lost to us altogether, and it would go to Dundee. For this reason we delegates are quite opposed to the ideas of this meeting. We want free-trade in India, and free-trade without restrictions.

MR. D. H. MACFARLANE, M. P., did not wish to take up the question in his capacity as delegate for the Calcutta Chamber, as it had been completely exhausted by his colleagues. Every one present, and in the country, most cordially reciprocated the expressions of friendship that came from Canada; and there was no colony belonging to Great Britain for which there was a stronger sympathy of cordiality than for Canada. At the same time he must say he did not gather from Mr. Dobell's speech the practical object he and his colleagues had in view in calling the meeting. He regretted their delegates from Canada had not formulated some scheme which they could put before the British Government, because the question of free-trade or protection in this country could not be settled by a meeting at the Westminster Palace Hotel, but it must be sent over to the other building opposite, viz., the House of Commons, to be settled there. He was quite sure the people of this country had had such experience of the advantage of free-trade that nothing would induce them to go back to protection; because they had

learnt the lesson that protective duties were only indirect taxes upon the people. He could well understand that it might suit the policy of very young countries that wished to promote their own manufactures to exclude manufactures from other countries during the time that they were getting their machinery in order for the purpose of becoming what they might call self-supporting. For a short time that policy might be wise and practical; but to carry on, as he understood the proposition to mean, a sort of duel between free-trade and protection, seemed to him a very short-sighted policy. He would vote for the resolution with great pleasure, because it seemed to him that there should be friendly and cordial relations between the colonies. He was sure they all agreed with that, but until the Dominion Board put forward some practical scheme he should reserve his vote on the question.

MR. J. N. BULLEN: I do not rise to speak on the general question, which has been fully discussed by my colleagues; I will only say that I entirely concur with every word that has fallen from them. What I wish to propose is, that this meeting be adjourned; and that the gentlemen who have called us together should formulate something definite to be considered hereafter. As far as that goes which has been proposed, there is not a word in it which I could not agree with and vote for; but if we are to understand that what we want is reciprocity (which I understand is veiled protection), I must say, as a delegate from India, and speaking from firm conviction, I could not possibly vote for that in any form. He concluded by moving the adjournment.

The following are extracts from a report of an interview between the Colonial and Indian Secretaries of State, and a Deputation of Delegates introduced by the Lord Mayor of London.

Mr. Stephen A. Ralli: My Lords, in conjunction with Mr. Bullen, ex-Member of the Legislative Council of Bengal, and Mr. Macfarlane, M.P., I have been named delegate at the Inter-colonial Conference of the Chamber of Commerce of Calcutta. The first question which the Calcutta delegates had to consider was, whether being free-traders, and representing a country which more than any other is bound to free-trade principles, they ought to take part in this Conference. After we had fully discussed this point, and had assisted at the first meeting of the Conference, we decided to join this Association, because we saw that its object was to try to bring closer, if possible, the trade relations between Great Britain, her Colonies, and India. One reason, moreover, which induced us to do so, was because we saw that while Canada has a population of four million inhabitants, who are large consumers of tea, coffee and tobacco (articles which India produces), the trade of India with Canada in those and other articles is next to nothing, and that this insignificant trade is transacted through England and through the United States instead of being carried on direct between India and Canada. The Calcutta delegates thought that it was possible, with the help of this Association and of the Governments of England and Canada, to make the trade between India and Canada a direct one, and to increase the same materially to the mutual benefit of India

and Canada. This was the reason which induced us to join the Conference and the Association which has resulted therefrom. We think that a closer connection between the United Kingdom, its colonies, and dependencies may increase the trade relations between them, and if such an object is to be obtained by our intercolonial union, the result will be satisfactory to all of us.

The Earl of Kimberley, after making some preliminary remarks, said—Being a free-trader, as I am, and believing in the soundness of our policy at home, I desire to see it pursued by all our colonies, and I do not see that we can do more than give them that which they are not always anxious to listen to—advice—and urge them to follow our example, which I think is much more calculated to bring them round to our commercial views. If I were to ask how the first resolution should be carried into effect, namely, "That in the opinion of this meeting it is a matter of the utmost importance for the promotion of the commercial interests of the British Empire, and preservation of its unity and integrity, to draw closer the trade relations between its various componant territories," I should not have the slightest difficulty whatever in saying how it ought to be accomplished, namely, that there should be a free-trade tariff in every one of the colonies. The Canadians have abandoned free-trade and adopted a protective policy, which I am sorry they have done. If any colony has reason to complain that there is anything in our tariff offending against the principles of free-trade, I think they will find hearty listeners in the present

Government. As regards the request for an enquiry, I do not see any ground in the argument put forward for such an enquiry. If there is any doubt as to what the tariffs of the different colonies are, I should be most happy to procure—what I am sure the colonies would readily furnish—ample evidence as to their existing tariffs. With regard to their tariffs which are all settled by their own Governments, I must confess I think they are much more competent to take a rational view of their own affairs than I should be in this room, or than would be done in the House of Commons sitting at Westminster. But there is no precise object to be gained by such an inquiry, because you want something in the nature of reciprocity, whereas, I think free-trade is the sound commercial policy, the tariffs are well-known in this country, and the policy of the different colonies is well known. For example, we know what the policy of Canada is, and we regret that the Canadians should have pursued that policy, but respecting, as we do, their self-government, we have not interfered, though we have witnessed it with regret, and we live in hopes that they may eventually come round to sounder views. I understood from the interesting speech which I lately read of the Canadian Minister of Finance, that from the Canadian point of view the policy pursued has been extremely successful, but I differ from it; and I cannot illustrate such a policy better than by repeating an anecdote related by that Minister. He said: "He had been talking to an American manufacturer of agricultural machines, who told him that formerly those machines were procured from the United States, now they are procured from Canada, and the American manufacturer. Your tariff has done for our

trade." That may be considered a triumph in Canada, but the result is that the Canadians will have to pay more for their machines than they could have got them for from the Americans; and I wish the Finance Minister could have read (which I think he could not have done) Monsieur Bastiut's famous argument that "if you were to keep the sun out by Act of Parliament, you would promote the manufacture of candles." I mention this little matter to show that there is the greatest possible difference of views between us, and, that being so, I do not think an inquiry could be of any use, as there is no probability of our coming to any agreement such as you desire. With regard to the Australian colonies, of course, in passing the Act which has been referred to, our desire was to promote closer intercourse between those colonies which are divided by artificial boundaries. We felt that it would be wrong when they expressed a desire to make an arrangement between themselves that we should stand in their way, and we left them to act as they pleased. If they should come to an agreement, as I hope they will, and that it will be one on free-trade principles, then it will be a thing which we shall all greatly rejoice in. At the time when the Act was passed I rather feared the tendency was the other way, but now I believe on the whole, except Victoria, the tendency is much more in the direction of free-trade. We have, however, not the slightest desire to dictate to the colonies, who have representative Government, what way they should go. I do not know that there is any other point which I need touch upon; nearly all turn upon the first and fourth resolutions; but I should like to say one word more as to the first resolution, only to confirm what was said with

regard to treaties with foreign powers. It is quite true that we have had that point carefully in view since I have been in office, and we have made arrangements with the Foreign Office, that in all cases where treaties are to be negotiated, in which the colonies are affected, that the colonies should have the opportunity to make their voice heard, and that, as far as possible, we should not make treaties without first of all their wishes being ascertained, and we have put Sir Alexander Galt in direct communication with certain foreign Governments with whom the Canadians wish to enter into some arrangement. On that point I entirely agree with the deputation, and I think it is of great importance for the unity of the Empire, that we should take care that all these treaties are carefully considered, and as far as possible, communicate with the colonies in all cases before they are eventually concluded. (Hear, hear.)

Marquis of Hartington: As Lord Kimberley has expressed the views of the Government so fully, and as so little has been said upon the subject of India, it is only necessary for me to say one word. Although Lord Kimberley has explained that there is so much difference of opinion between the great majority of the speakers of the Deputation and Her Majesty's Government, that it would be almost useless to frame instructions upon which any enquiry should be instituted, still, I think it is satisfactory to see that representatives of different colonies and dependencies of this country meet in London to consider and discuss questions involving the principle of trade considerations. As far as India is concerned the wants, wishes, and interests of that Empire are tolerably

well represented in this country. India is, to a certain extent, governed by this country, and at all events there exists a Government and an organization which is always ready to listen to any representation that may be made in which any class of the community in India, or any class interested in Indian trade, who would be always disposed to give their assistance to any particular measure which may be pointed out to them as tending in any way to increase trade and commerce. I am sure that, as Mr. Ralli said, the Government in India, and also at home, will be at all events ready to give their most cordial co-operation to it. As regards India I think very little can be done in the way of improving its trade and the conditions of its tariffs. I must point out that a great reduction in the revenue of India has been made in the last twelve months—a reduction of something like thirty-three per cent. of the Indian tariffs has, generally speaking, I will not say entirely an excise tariff, but simply one proposed for revenue purposes. We encouraged the Government of India to proceed in that course, and I have reason to hope will, in the end, be found—although there is considerable opposition to free-trade in India—to be one most conducive to their own trade and their own prosperity. I will not detain you longer; I would only say that although there does not seem a probability, or a unanimity, in coming to an agreement as to the primary object the deputation have in view, I will be anxious, at all times, to consider suggestions that may be made.

EAST INDIAN RAILWAY CO.'S TARIFF OF CHARGES.—*(Continued from page 157.)*

From Chamber, to East Indian Railway Company.

Calcutta, 26th December 1881.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have had before them the question of the rates charged on your line of railway and the arrangements for delivering produce at Howrah, in connection with the competition between Calcutta and Bombay for the trade of Upper India which rivalry has been growing in intensity for some time. It has been represented to them that with the opening of through communication, *viâ* Rajpootana, between Northern and Western India, the volume of trade has an ever increasing tendency to flow in the direction of Bombay. This is especially the case as regards articles of export, as will appear by the following figures, selected from the accounts relating to the Trade and Navigation of British India for October last :—

Exports of Indian Produce for 7 months, from 1st April to 31st October.

		1879.	1880.	1881.
COTTON	Bengal	Rs. 1,14,84,876	Rs. 71,53,397	Rs. 44,22,315
	Bombay	,, 4,50,79,784	,, 6,46,02,113	,, 5,77,71,447
Percentage	Bengal	20·30	9 96	7·11
	Bombay	79 70	90·04	92·89
SEEDS	Bengal	Rs. 1,86,39,773	Rs. 2,39,34,813	Rs. 1,64,76,259
	Bombay	,, 52,12,143	,, 1,17,66,014	,, 1,86,60,572
Percentage	Bengal	78 14	67·04	46·89
	Bombay	21 86	32 96	53 11
WHEAT	Bengal	Rs. 48,99,863	Rs. 94,93,170	Rs. 1,64,64,202
	Bombay	,, 7,29,988	,, 77,87,207	,, 2,67,16,608
Percentage	Bengal	87·03	54·93	38 12
	Bombay	12·97	45 07	61·88

It is at a glance evident, from those figures, that the advantages which the Western port enjoys in its greater proximity to Europe, and consequent cheaper sea freights, are telling heavily against us. The Committee are unable to give with the same accuracy the extent to which Bombay is gaining upon Calcutta in the matter of imports, but it is within the experience of firms engaged in the trade that the competition is becoming keener every day. Instances have been brought to the notice of the Committee where specialities, used only in the North-West, and of which Calcutta has hitherto enjoyed the monopoly, are now being sent by Bombay in greater and greater quantity. The inference to be drawn from this fact is, that if a diversion of trade is occurring in the case of special goods which can be at once detected, ordinary goods, imported by every one, which cannot be so easily traced, are being affected in like manner.

All connected with Calcutta have recognised that, upon the completion of the railway referred to, a certain displacement of trade was inevitable, but it is felt by my Committee that, by those who have the most vital interest in attracting trade to this port, much might be done to counterbalance the drawbacks under which we labour as compared with our Bombay competitors.

Holding these views, they some months ago addressed a circular to the members of the Chamber asking their opinions as to the manner in which the East Indian Railway Company might best encourage a larger traffic over their line, with advantage both to themselves and to Calcutta merchants; and the following observations are based upon the replies received by the Committee.

Rates:—As regards up-country produce the figures above quoted, and the replies to the Chamber's circular, both show that Bombay dealers can afford to pay higher prices than those who buy for the Calcutta market, owing mainly to the combined land and sea freights being in favor of Bombay. It is alleged that firms established to buy produce up-country for shipment at Calcutta, now send the greater part of their purchases *viâ* Bombay. This movement was checked between the 15th July and 31st October last, when special reduced rates were in force from up-country stations, but since rates have reverted to their former level, Bombay once more gets the preference. If Calcutta is to retain the share of produce it has hitherto received, the East Indian Railway must reduce its rates sufficiently to counterbalance, if not altogether, at least in part, the advantages which Bombay has over us in sea freight, port charges, and insurance.

The above remarks apply chiefly to rates from the more distant stations above Allahabad. Some of the replies received by the Committee are to the effect, that it is cheaper to employ boat carriage for goods from Patna downwards than to make use of the Railway. This, however, is a branch of enquiry upon which it is unnecessary to dwell at present.

As regards rates for minerals, it is pointed out that in the case of coal, carriage by rail usually exceeds the prime cost of the article. One firm says—"the cost of one of "our best mine coal, loaded into wagon at Seetarampore, "is Rs. 3-4 per ton; the freight to Calcutta—138 miles "—Rs. 3-13 per ton. The same coal despatched to Cawn-

"pore, distance 546 miles, has added to it Rs. 12-13 "per ton for freight."

"Nothing is done by the Railway for this *but carry the* "*coal.* At the loading place we have to provide our "own wharfs or pay hire for theirs. We load and "unload the coal."

Seeing that from the situation of the mines the Railway have a practical monopoly of the carriage of coal, the employment of boats being impossible, care should be taken that this monopoly is not abused. The Committee of the Chamber believe that a reduction in the rates of freight would pay the Railway by leading to the more extensive use of coal all over the country.

Next to the question of rates charged by the Railway, comes that of the facilities afforded for examining, weighing, and taking delivery of goods at Howrah. Owing to the conditions under which the export trade of Calcutta is carried on, and the position of the Railway terminus at Howrah with reference to the shipping, the Railway Company must of necessity add the business of warehousemen to that of carriers if they wish to increase their traffic; and the sooner they recognise this the better. The Company must get rid of the idea that their work ends with the transport of the goods to the Howrah station sheds. They have a vital interest in facilitating the examination, weighment, delivery and shipment of the goods after they reach Howrah: the bulk of the export trade in seeds and grain is now made by contracts for delivery there, and if shippers do not find the Railway affording those facilities and

that protection which are essential to their business, trade will be driven to seek other channels, not only to the detriment of Calcutta as a port, but to the serious loss of the Railway itself.

The replies to the Committee's circular indicate that dissatisfaction is felt; 1. with regard to the delay in giving notice of arrival of goods; 2. the insufficient time allowed for taking delivery; 3. the want of sufficient facilities for examining, sampling, weighing, and marking consignments; 4. the difficulties attending the settlement of claims for damage and short delivery; and 5, the mode of giving delivery, and the insufficiency of jetty and other accommodation for goods intended for export.

Notices of arrival—are said to be very irregular, coming to hand occasionally after the parcels to which they relate, have been removed. In no case are they delivered until after the goods have been some hours at Howrah, and as the notice dates from hour of arrival, it usually happens that a consignee finds he has only a few hours left in which to examine, weigh, and complete delivery of a parcel before becoming liable to a charge for demurrage. Large consignees have in consequence to keep their own people at the station to watch and report the arrival of goods. In a former communication from this Chamber it was suggested that particulars of all consignments passing Raneegunge, or some station distant from Howrah 6 to 8 hours' run should be telegraphed to the goods superintendent to enable him to issue notices before the goods actually arrive. The simplest solution of the difficulty, however

would be to increase the time allowed for taking delivery from 24 to 48 hours.

Time allowed for delivery.—The replies to the Chamber's circular are unanimous in stating that the 24 hours now allowed for taking delivery are insufficient. As pointed out in the preceding paragraph, this period is curtailed in the majority of cases by the delay which takes place between the period of arrival and the time at which the consignee receives notice. But even if the full 24 hours were in every case available, consignees say that this time is required to sample, examine, and weigh consignments; after that boats have to be procured, and frequently tides do not suit for shipping goods. Besides all this, it sometimes happens that Railway receipts from out of the way stations are often late in arriving, or are attached to drafts which must be paid or provided for, before the receipt is delivered to the merchant. Exporters therefore agree in asking that the old system of allowing 48 hours for taking delivery before charging demurrage should be reverted to.

Facilities for examining, sampling, weighing and marking consignments.—The contention of the Railway authorities hitherto has been that, as carriers, they are not bound to provide the facilities referred to. As already pointed out, however, the position of Howrah station and the necessities of the export trade of Calcutta are such, that if facilities are not provided, trade must find other channels. As regards the actual state of things, one of the largest exporting firms says:—"There are "no facilities afforded us when taking delivery at "Howrah: in fact to such an extent are we incon-

"venienced that on several occasions we have been "obliged to sample and weigh in boats." The Committee understand that the ruling practice is for the Railway to insist on prepayment of freight before any examination or weighment of consignments is allowed, and when any claim is made for damage or short delivery, the Railway Company having got their freight set up a plea of non-liability; should the claim be pressed, and the goods remain undelivered pending a settlement, the Company enforce demurrage with a view to bring pressure to bear on the consignee to waive his claim. As regards weighment, exporters represent that the Railway authorities do not assist at this operation as they should do, and that merchants are not, as a matter of right, allowed to weigh under cover such consignments of grain and other goods as are liable to damage from exposure, but are only allowed to do so as a favour. If the Railway officials choose they may, and occasionally they do, compel consignees of goods to weigh outside the sheds, even in bad weather. As regards coal, one firm says "Our coal is weighed at the despatching station "and not again, so that the loss by the way falls both "for freight and coal on the consignors. In the rains "*formerly* an allowance was given because the coal was wet; and as the wagons, besides being wet themselves "and giving a heavier tare than is marked, are almost "water-tight, it can be understood that this was only just. "No allowance is made *now*."

Settlement of claims.—This matter has already been incidentally referred to in the preceding paragraph. It is pointed out by one firm that the Company especially

try to avoid responsibility for damage to goods from stations on feeder lines. Seeing, however, that they can protect themselves when receiving such goods, while the consignee cannot possibly do so, they ought without hesitation to accept responsibility for all damage and short delivery in respect of all consignments whatever arriving at Howrah, for which the consignee holds a clean receipt. A prompt settlement of claims is also most desirable, and the practice of insisting on payment of freight before consignees are allowed to examine and weigh their goods, should be abandoned.

Delivery, &c.—The change introduced on 1st January last in the mode of delivery, whereby consignees were required to supply labour for the removal of their consignments into boats and carts, has been most unpopular. It is attended with delays and disputes, and leads to much confusion, which did not occur under the former system of contractor's coolies employed by the Company to do the work. When the change was made the Company made no concession in the matter of rates, although they effected a saving to themselves of about one rupee per 100 maunds. They have since allowed a refund to consignees of Rs. 6 per 1,000 maunds, but that sum does not cover the cost of removing consignments, which comes to from Rs. 9 to 10 per 1,000 maunds. All consignees would prefer giving up the rebate and returning to the former system.

Accommodation.—The traffic has overgrown the shed accommodation, the extension of which should be promptly taken in hand. So far as the Committee are able to judge, there is yet some room for this on the Railway

premises as at present arranged, and they opine that by obvious expedients the shed or warehousing accommodation might be almost indefinitely increased.

The accommodation for delivery into boats is very insufficient, and of facilities for loading coal into carts there are practically none; to reach a cart from one depôt, the Committee are informed that coolies have to carry the coal on their heads across ten lines of Railway. As regards unloading coal into boats, it must be done by hand, unless the coal happens to be in hopper wagons and the tide is in.

The Committee have now gone over the various points brought to their notice in the replies received to the circular referred to, and they feel sure the complaints thus brought prominently before you will be duly enquired into, and a remedy applied where that is practicable. They note from figures published in the *Gazette of India* of 10th instant, that the East Indian Railway earned the largest nett profits last year of any line in India, the figures for the following four lines being—

East Indian Railway	...	...	8·71 %
Great Indian Peninsular Railway		...	4·44 „
Rajputana State	„	...	3·62 „
Bombay and Baroda	„	...	5·72 „

The Committee understand that the cost of carrying a ton per mile on the East Indian Line is only ·232*d.* as against ·634*d.* per ton per mile on the Rajputana State Railway. As the Government of India have declared that their policy with regard to railway rates is, that these should be regulated so that the lines which

serve Calcutta and Bombay, respectively, shall earn fair and equal profits, it is evident from the figures quoted that there is a very large margin for reduction in the East Indian rates. The Committee deprecate any interference with the natural course of trade, and while they do not deny that Bombay is fully entitled to all the advantages she is able to derive from her situation, magnificent harbour, and cheaper port charges, they feel that Calcutta ought not to be denied any countervailing benefit which the greater cheapness of her railway communication with the North-West should give her.

In view of this the Committee cannot too strongly impress upon the executive of the railway the necessity for a thorough overhauling of the tariff with a view to reducing rates of carriage on all goods. Next to this, but scarcely inferior in importance, is the necessity for affording consignees ampler facilities at Howrah in the direction pointed out in this letter. The Railway Company have, if possible, an even stronger interest in fostering the trade of this port than Calcutta merchants, for whilst the merchants can take their capital and their energies elsewhere, the Railway can scarcely do so. If, therefore, the executive of the railway be not stirred by motives of self-interest to suit their policy to the changing conditions of trade, the Committee of the Chamber cannot expect that much effect would be produced by any further representations they might put forward.

From Government of Bengal to Chamber.

No. 3532*R, Dated Calcutta, 1st December* 1881.

Referring to your letter of the 30th August last, I am directed to request that the Chamber will favor Government with an abstract of any replies which may have been received to their circular letter of the 30th June last, a copy of which was forwarded with the above quoted communication.

2. His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor will also be glad to receive statistical information of the export and import trade of Calcutta during the past six months as compared with the trade of the corresponding period of each of the last 5 years, in order to ascertain whether the opening of through railway communication from Upper India to Bombay, *viâ* Delhi, has injuriously affected the trade of Calcutta.

From Chamber to Government of Bengal.

Calcutta, 5th January 1882.

The Committee of the Chamber of Commerce desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 3532 of the 1st ultimo.

In compliance with your request to be furnished with an abstract of replies to the Committee's circular of the 30th June last to members of the Chamber relative to the tariff and general traffic arrangements of the East Indian Railway, the Committee instruct me to forward,

for submission to the Honorable the Lieutenant-Governor, a copy of a letter lately addressed to the Agent of the Railway in which the results of the Committee's reference are fully detailed.

In attention also to His Honor's request, the Committee forward a comparative statement of the import and export trade of Bengal for the last 5 years: and as they are in receipt of the official returns for the past 8 months, they have prepared the statistics from the 1st April to 30th November 1881.

In order to compare the trade of Bengal with that of Bombay for the same period, the Committee have added the figures shewing the trade of the latter Presidency also; and it will be observed that while the imports of Bengal have advanced about a crore of rupees, those of Bombay have improved by about double that amount; the exports from Bengal have remained almost stationary, and those of Bombay have been increased by nearly 5 crores.

FOREIGN TRADE OF BENGAL AND BOMBAY.

IMPORTS *For 8 months, 1st April to 30th November,*—1877 *to* 81. EXPORTS. { Indian Produce and Manufactures only.

(Exclusive of Treasure.)

	1877.	1878.	1879.	1880.	1881.		1877.	1878.	1879.	1880.	1881.
Bengal ...	13,12,88,477	11,77,04,588	12,48,51,056	14,57,14,306	14,04,02,943	Bengal ...	19,50,98,284	17,05,55,359	17,62,87,142	19,06,42,318	19,32,63,468
Bombay ...	9,06,31,226	8,86,32,572	7,94.36,857	11,98,27,102	11,46,81,331	Bombay ...	13,16,88,007	12,12,20,827	12,88,19,131	15,23,15,961	18,12,21,602

FUNDS OF THE CHAMBER.

The balance at credit of the Chamber on the 31st October 1881 amounted to Rs. 1,670-7-4, exclusive of Rs. 15,000 in 4 per cent. Government Securities.

A. B. INGLIS,

President.

APPENDIX.

FUNDS OF THE CHAMBER.

Statement of the Funds of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, from 1st May to 31st October 1881.

To Office Rent			900	0	0	By Balance		2,857	10	8
„ Establishment			5,451	0	0	„ Government Securities ...		15,000	0	0
„ Charges General			5,664	9	4					
		Rs.	12,015	9	4		Rs.	17,857	10	8
						„ Subscriptions ...	7,268 0 0			
To Balance—						„ Price Current and other Publications ...	2,622 6 0			
Cash in Bank of Bengal	141 2 7					„ Charges General refunded	598 0 0			
„ in hand ...	1,529 4 9					„ Interest on Government Securities	340 0 0			
Reserve in Government Paper	15,000 0 0									
			16,670	7	4			10,828	6	0
		Rupees	28,686	0	8		Rupees	28,686	0	8

CALCUTTA,
1st November 1881.

E. E.
H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

TONNAGE SCHEDULE for the PORT OF CALCUTTA, adopted at a Special General Meeting of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce held on the 12th February 1872, with effect from 1st September 1872, except as regards the measurement of Cotton, Hemp, Jute, Jute Cuttings, Rhea, Safflower, and other articles similarly packed, which, under the Chamber's Resolution of 14th June 1872, had effect from 1st July 1873.

ARTICLES.	Cwt. per Ton Nett.	Cubic Feet per Ton.
Aloes, in bags and boxes	20	.....
Alum, in ditto	20	.....
Aniseed, in bags	8	.....
Arrowroot, in cases	.....	50
Arsenic, in bags or cases	20	.....
Asafœtida, in bags and boxes	20	.....
Apparel, in boxes	.....	50
Bark, in bags	8	.....
Bees' Wax	20 gross.	
Barilla	20	.....
Betel-nut	20	.....
Books	.....	50
Borax	20	.....
Bran	14	.....
Brimstone	20	.....
Bullion	at per cent.	
Cake-lac, in bags	16	.....
Camphor, in cases	.....	50
Cardamoms, in robins	8	.....
„ boxes	.....	50
Cassia, in boxes	.....	50
„ bags	12	.....
Castor Seed	15	.....
Chillies (dry), in bags	8	.....
China Root, in bags	11	.....
„ boxes	.....	50
Chiretta	.....	50
Churrah	14	.....
Cigars	.....	50
Cloves, in bags	8	.....
„ boxes	.....	50
Coals	20	.....
Cochineal	.....	50
Coffee, in bags	18	.....
„ casks	16	.....

ARTICLES.	Cwt. per Ton Nett.	Cubic Feet per Ton.
Coral, rough	20	
Coir, loose and unscrewed	12	
Copras, or Cocoanut Kernel	14	
Coriander Seed	12	
Cotton	5 bales not exceeding	52
Cowries	20	
Cummin Seed	8	
" Black	8	
Cutch, in bags	18	
Dates, wet	20	
" dry	16	
Dholl	20	
Elephants' Teeth, in bulk	20	
Furniture		50
Garlic and Onions	12	
Ginger	16	
Gram	20	
Gums, in cases		50
Gunny Bags and Gunny Cloth		50
Gunjah		50
Hemp	5 bales not exceeding	52
Hides, Buffalo, or Cow, cured	14	
Hoofs, Horn Shavings and Tips	20	
Horns, Cow, Buffalo, or Deer	20	
India Rubber, in bags	16	
" cases		50
Indigo		50
Iron	20	
Jute	5 bales not exceeding	52
Jute Cuttings	5 bales not exceeding	52
Lac Dye		50
Lard	20 gross.	
Linseed	20	
Mace		50
Machinery	20	
Metals	20	
Mathie Seed	18	
Mirabolams	16	
Molasses	2 puncheons or 4 hhds.	
Mother o'Pearl, in bags	20	
" chests	20	
Munjeet		50
Mustard or Rape Seed	20	
Niger Seed	20	
Nutmegs, in cases or casks		50

ARTICLES.	Cwt. per Ton Nett.	Cubic Feet per Ton.
Nux Vomica	16	.....
Oats	16	.....
Oil, in cases	.....	50
„ casks	4 hhds.	
Opium	per chest.	
Paddy	16	.....
Palmatine, in bags	16	.....
Peas	20	.....
Pepper, Long	12	.....
„ Black	14	.....
Planks and Deals	.....	50
Poppy Seed	20	.....
Putchuck	10	.....
Rags	.....	50
Raw Silk, in bales	10	.....
Rattans for dunnage	20	.....
Red Wood, ditto	20	.....
Rhea	5 bales not exceeding	52
Rice	20	.....
Rope, in coils	.....	50
„ Lines and Twines, in bundles ...	16	.....
Rum, in casks	2 puncheons or 4 hhds.	
Safflower	.....	50
Sago, in cases	.....	50
Sal-ammoniac, in bags	20	.....
„ boxes	20 gross.	
Saltpetre	20	.....
Salt	20	.....
Sapan Wood for dunnage	20	.....
Sealing Wax, in cases	.....	50
Seed-lac, in cases	.....	50
„ bags	16	.....
Senna	.....	50
Shells, rough, in bags	20	.....
Shell-lac, in cases	.....	50
„ bags	16	.....
Silk Chussum	.....	50
„ Waste	.....	50
Silk Piece-Goods	.....	50
Skins	14	.....
Soap, country, in cases	.....	50
„ bags	15	.....
„ bar	20	.....
Stick Lac, in cases	.....	50
„ bags	16	.....

ARTICLES.	Cwt. per Ton Nett.	Cubic Feet per Ton.
Sugar	20	.....
Tallow, in cases or casks	20	.....
Talc	20	.....
Tamarinds, in cases or casks ...	20	.....
Tapioca	.....	50
Tea	.....	50
Teel Seed	20	.....
Timber, round	.....	40
" squared	.....	50
Tincal	20	.....
Tobacco, in bales	16	.....
Tortoise Shells, in chests	.....	50
Turmeric	16	.....
Wheat	20	.....
Wool	.....	50

1. Goods in Casks or Cases to be calculated gross weight when paying freight by weight; and where freight is made payable on measurement, the measurement be taken on the Custom House wharf, or other shipping wharf within a radius of 5 miles from the Custom House, except in the case of Cotton, the measurement of which shall be taken at the Screw-house.

2. Measurement to be taken at largest part of the bale,—inside the lashing on one side, and outside on the other.

3. Jute, Jute Cuttings, Hemp, Cotton, Safflower, and other articles similarly packed, are screwed in bales varying from 300 to 400lbs.

4. The term "dead weight" shall be understood to mean the following articles:—Sugar, Saltpetre, Rice, Wheat, Gram, Dholl, Peas, Linseed, Rapeseed and all Metals.

☞ By a Resolution of a General Meeting of the Chamber held on the 31st May 1881, the Tonnage Schedule was forthwith amended as regards Jute, Jute Cuttings, Cotton, Hemp, and Rhea Fibre, the ton of each of which was altered from 50 cubic feet to 5 *bales not exceeding 52 cubic feet.*

H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

SCHEDULE OF COMMISSION CHARGES

Revised and adopted by a Special General Meeting of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, held on the 18th June 1861,—with effect from 1st January 1862.

1.	On the sale, purchase, or shipment of Bullion, Gold Dust or Coin	1 per cent.
2.	On the purchase (when in funds) or sale of Indigo, Raw Silk, Silk Piece-Goods, Opium, Pearls, Precious Stones, or Jewellery	2½ „
3.	On purchasing ditto when funds are provided by the Agent	5 „
4.	On the sale or purchase of all other goods—the commission in all cases to be charged upon the gross amount of sales, and in regard to purchases upon both cost and charges ...	5 „
5.	On returns for Consignments if made in produce ...	2½ „
6.	On returns of Consignments if in Bills, Bullion, or Treasure	1 „
7.	On accepting Bills against Consignments ...	1 „
8.	On the sale or purchase of Ships, Factories, Houses, Lands, and all property of a like description ...	2½ „
9.	On goods and treasure consigned, and all other property of any description referred to Agency for sale, whether advanced upon or otherwise, which shall afterwards be withdrawn; and on goods consigned for conditional delivery to others and so delivered, on invoice amount at 2*s.* per rupee	half com.
10.	On making advances or procuring loans of money for commercial purposes, when the aggregate commission does not exceed 5 per cent. ...	2½ per cent.
11.	On ordering, or receiving and delivering goods, or superintending the fulfilment of contracts, or on the shipment of goods, where no other commission is derived	2½ „

12.	On guaranteeing Bills, Bonds, or other engagements, and on becoming security for administration of Estates, or to Government for the disbursement of public money	2½	per cent.
13.	On *del-credere*, or guaranteeing the due realization of sales	2½	,,
14.	On the management of Estates for Executors or Administrators	2½	,,
15.	On chartering ships or engaging tonnage for constituents for vessels to proceed to outports for loading	2½	,,
16.	On advertising as the Agents for Owners or Commanders of ships for Cabin passengers, on the amount of passage money, whether the same shall pass through the Agent's hands or not ...	2½	,,
17.	On procuring freight for a ship by a shipping order or charter, or on procuring employment for a ship on monthly hire, or acting as Agents for owners, Captain, or Charterers of a vessel, upon the gross amount of freight, brokerage inclusive ...	5	,,
18.	On engaging Asiatic Emigrants for a ship to the Mauritius, the West Indies, or elsewhere, upon the gross amount of earnings	5	,,
19.	On engaging troops for a ship to Great Britain or elsewhere, on the gross amount of passage money for rank and file	2½	,,
20.	On realising inward freight, inward troops, Emigrant, or Cabin passage money	2½	,,
21.	On landing and re-shipping goods from any vessel in distress, or on landing and selling by auction damaged goods from any such vessel, and acting as Agent for the Master on behalf of all concerned, on the declared value of all such goods as may be re-shipped, and on the nett proceeds of all such goods as may be publicly sold ...	5	,,
	If Opium, Indigo, Raw Silk, or Silk Piece-Goods ...	2½	,,
	If Treasure, Precious Stones, or Jewellery ...	1	,,

22. On effecting Insurances, whether on lives or property ... ... 2½ per cent.
23. On settling Insurance claims, losses, and averages of all classes, and on procuring returns of premium ... ... 2½ „
24. On drawing, purchasing, selling, or negotiating Bills of Exchange ... ... 1 „
25. On debts or other claims when a process at law or arbitration is incurred in claiming them ... 2½ „
    Or, if recovered by such means ... ... 5 „
26. On Bills of Exchange returned dishonored ... 1 „
27. On collecting House Rent ... ... 2½ „
28. On ship's Disbursements ... ... 2½ „
29. On realising Bottomry Bonds, or negotiating any loan on *respondentia* .. ... 2½ „
30. On granting Letters of Credit ... ... 1 „
31. On sale or purchase of Government Securities and Bank or other Joint Stock Shares, and on every exchange, or transfer not by purchase from one class to another ... .. ½ „
32. On delivering up Government Securities and Bank or other Joint Stock Shares, on the market value. ½ „
33. On all amounts debited and credited within the year (less the balance brought forward) upon which no commission amounting to 5 per cent. has been charged ... ... ½

☞ Brokerage when paid is to be separately charged.

H. W. I. WOOD,
Secretary.

CONVERSION OF STERLING FREIGHT INTO INDIAN CURRENCY.

The following Resolutions were adopted at a General Meeting of the Chamber, held on the 17th January 1882.

"That the Resolutions adopted 31st May 1876 respecting "conversion into Indian currency of sterling freight "and commission thereon be hereby rescinded, and "that the following Resolutions be substituted in "their stead, with immediate effect, *viz* :—

1. "That, in the absence of any stipulation to the "contrary, sterling freight payable in Calcutta, in- "cluding differences of freight adjusted in Calcutta, "and all commissions on sterling freight made pay- "able at Calcutta or there brought into account, "shall be reduced into Indian money at the rate of "exchange for Bank Bills on London on demand "which shall have been current on the mail-day "next preceding the day when the amount to be "dealt with shall be ascertained.

2. "That, in the absence of anything to the contrary ex- "pressed, the words 'current rate of exchange' shall "be held to mean the rate current for Bank Bills on "London payable on demand.

3. "That, for the purpose of charging commission or "adjusting differences, freight expressed in dollars "(American) shall be converted into sterling at a "uniform rate of fifty pence per dollar."

Forms of Bill of Lading and Boat Note as adopted at a General Meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, on the 17th January 1880.

---

in good order and well-conditioned,

by _____

in and upon the good Ship or Vessel called the _____

whereof is Master for this present Voyage _____

and now lying in the Port of Calcutta and bound for _____

_____

being marked and numbered as in the margin, and to be delivered, in the like good order and well-conditioned, at the aforesaid Port of _____

(The Act of God, the Queen's Enemies, fire, and all and every other dangers and accidents of the Seas, Rivers, and Navigation of whatever nature and kind soever excepted)

unto _____

or to _____ Assigns, Freight for the said Goods being payable as customary _____

_____

_____

with Average accustomed. In Witness whereof, the Master or Agents of the said Ship hath affirmed to _____ Bills of Lading, all of this tenor and date, one of which being accomplished, the others to stand void.

Dated in CALCUTTA, this _____ day of _____ 18

Weight and Contents unknown.

No.....

Calcutta,.....18.....

To

THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE

Ship.....

SIR,

Please receive on board the undernoted Goods from Messrs. ..... and grant a clean receipt for the same.

N. B.—This cargo is only shipped on the special understanding that the Chief Officer will sign for all counter or quality marks and numbers, and the Bales or Packages are not to be taken on board except on these terms, and also when a Sircar is in attendance to check the tally.

In case of any dispute, the Shippers request prompt information in writing from one of the Officers of the ship.

Marks and Numbers.	Number of Packages.	Description of Goods.	

No.....

Calcutta,.....18.....

Received on board the ship..... in good order and condition the undermentioned Goods from Messrs.....

.....

N. B.—The Chief Officer is requested not to take in any package unless he is prepared to sign for all the qualifying marks and numbers.
All packages in bad order must be returned.

Marks and Numbers.	Number of Packages.	Description of Goods.	

Arrived alongside.....
Discharged.....
Returned.....
Remarks.....

(Signature).....
Chief Officer.

Ship.....
Moorings.....

MEMBERS OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Agelasto, A., and Co.
Apcar and Co.
Anderson, Wright and Co.
Acerboni, F., and Co.
Barlow and Co.
Begg, Dunlop and Co.
Blackhall, W. S. D. Esq., *Manager, Agra Bank.*
Burn and Co.
Barry and Co.
Balmer, Lawrie and Co.
Carlisles, Nephews and Co.
Carritt and Co.
Crooke, Rome and Co.
Cohn Brothers and Fuchs.
Duncan Brothers and Co.
Dwarkanath Dutt and Co.
Duffus, J., Esq.
Ernsthausen and Oesterley.
Ewing and Co.
Elliott, John, and Co.
Ezra, E. D. J., Esq.
Finlay, Muir and Co.
Gisborne and Co.
Graham and Co.
Grindlay and Co.
Gubboy, Elias S., Esq.
Harper, G., Esq., *Agent, Oriental Bank Corporation.*
Henderson, George, and Co.
Heilgers, F. W. and Co.
Hoare, Miller and Co.
Huber and Co.
Hobson, Conor and Co.
Jardine, Skinner and Co.
Kettlewell, Bullen and Co.
Kyd, John, Esq., *Manager, National Bank of India.*
Kelly and Co.
Ker, Dods and Co.
King, Hamilton and Co.
King, W. Vale and Co.
W. A. N. Langdon, Esq., *Manager Delhi & London Bank, Limited.*
W. A. Main, Esq., *Acting Agent, Chartered Bank of India, Australia, and China.*
Morriss, E., Esq., *Agent, Hong-Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation.*
R. Murray, Esq., *Agent, Chartered Mercantile Bank of India, London and China.*
Mackillican, J., and Co.
Mackinnon, Mackenzie and Co.
Mackenzie, Lyall and Co.
Macneill and Co.
Macknight, Anderson and Co.
McIntosh, A. R., and Co.
Moran, W., and Co.
Oldemeyer and Hadenfeldt.
Payn, T., Esq., *Manager, Comptoir d'Escompte de Paris.*
Petrocochino Brothers.
Prawnkissen Law and Co.
Prestage, F., Esq., *Agent, Eastern Bengal Railway Company.*
Pigott, Chapman and Co.
Ralli Brothers.
Reinhold and Co.
Robert and Charriol.
Rentiers and Co.
Schroder, Smidt and Co.
Schoene, Kilburn and Co.
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Thomas, J., and Co.
Turner, Morrison and Co.
Tamvaco and Co.
Tambaci, Paul and Son.
Uilmann, Hirschhorn and Co.
Wilkinson, Captain C. J., *Superintendent, P. & O. Company.*
Whitney, Brothers and Co.
Williamson, Magor and Co.
Wiseman, Mitchell, Reid and Co.
Yule, Andrew and Co.

Honorary Member :

J. A. Crawford, Esq., C. S., late Collector of Customs.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

OF THE

BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

First ..... That the Society shall be styled "THE BENGAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE."

Second... That the object and duty of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce shall be to watch over and protect the general commercial interests of the Presidency of Bengal, and specially those of the port of Calcutta; to employ all means within its power for the removal of evils, the redress of grievances, and the promotion of the common good; and, with that view, to communicate with Government, public authorities, associations, and individuals; to receive references from, and to arbitrate between, parties willing to abide by the judgment and decision of the Chamber; and to form a code of practice to simplify and facilitate transaction of business.

Third.... That merchants, bankers, ship-owners, and brokers shall alone be admissible as members of the Chamber.

Fourth... That candidates for admission as members of the Chamber shall be proposed and seconded by two members, and may

be elected by the Committee provisionally, such election being subject to confirmation at the next ensuing General Meeting.

Fifth..... That the subscription of firms and banks shall be 16 rupees per mensem, of individual members 10 rupees per mensem, and of mofussil members 32 rupees per annum.

Sixth..... That any member of the Chamber whose subscription shall be three months in arrears shall cease to be a member, and his name shall be removed by the Committee from the list of members after one month's notice of such default.

Seventh... That the business and funds of the Chamber shall be managed by a Committee of not less than five nor more than seven members, including the President and Vice-President, to be elected annually at a General Meeting of the Chamber in the month of May; the President, or, in his absence, the Vice-President, being ex-officio Chairman of the Committee, and in the absence of the President and Vice-President, the Committee to elect its own Chairman. Three to form a quorum.

Eighth... Annual elections of President, Vice-President, and members of the Com-

mittee shall be determined by a majority of votes of members, such votes being given in voting cards to be issued by the Secretary, numbered and bearing his signature; and no voting card shall be received for such purpose unless so authenticated. All vacancies created by the absence of the President, or Vice-President, from the Presidency for three months, or by departure for Europe, or by death, shall be forthwith filled up, and the election determined by votes to be taken as above and declared by the Committee. All vacancies created as above by the absence, departure, or death of any of the members of the Committee shall be forthwith filled up by selection by the Committee, subject to approval at first ordinary general meeting thereafter.

☞ *It is specially requested that before a member is returned to serve on the Committee, his nominator shall have ascertained his willingness to accept office in the event of his election by voting cards.*

Ninth..... That parties holding powers of procuration shall, in the absence of their principals, be eligible to serve as members of the Committee.

Tenth..... Two members of a firm or representatives of a bank shall not serve on the Committee at the same time.

Eleventh. That the Committee shall meet for the purpose of transacting such business as may come within the province of the Chamber at such times as may suit their convenience, and that the record of their proceedings be open to the inspection of members, subject to such regulations as the Committee may deem expedient.

Twelfth. That all proceedings of the Committee be subject to approval or otherwise of General Meetings duly convened.

Thirteenth. That a half-yearly report of the proceedings of the Committee be prepared, printed, and circulated for information of members three days previous to the General Meeting at which such report and proceedings of the Committee shall be submitted for approval.

Fourteenth. That the Secretary shall be elected by the Committee; such election to be subject to confirmation at the next ensuing General Meeting.

Fifteenth. That General Meetings of the Chamber shall be held at such times as the Com-

mittee may consider convenient for the despatch of business.

Sixteenth. That any number of members present shall be held to constitute a General Meeting, called in conformity with the Rules of the Chamber for the despatch of ordinary business.

Seventeenth. That on the requisition of any five members of the Chamber, the President, or, in his absence, the Vice-President, or Chairman of Committee, shall call a Special General Meeting, to be held within 15 days subsequent to receipt of such requisition.

Eighteenth. That every subscribing firm or bank shall be entitled to one vote only, and that the Chairman of Committee and Chairman of General Meetings and Special General Meetings shall have a casting vote in cases of equality of votes.

Nineteenth. That parties holding powers of procuration shall, in the absence of their principals, be entitled to vote.

Twentieth. That voting by proxy shall be allowed; provided proxies are in favour of members of the Chamber.

Twenty-first. That the Chamber reserves to itself the right of expelling any of its members ;

such expulsion to be decided by the votes of three-fourths of members present in person or by proxy at any Special General Meeting of the Chamber convened for the consideration of such expulsion.

Twenty-second. That strangers visiting the Presidency may be admitted by the Committee as honorary members for a period not exceeding two months.

Twenty-third. That no change in the rules and regulations of the Chamber shall be made, except by the votes of a majority of the members of the Chamber present in person or by proxy at a Special General Meeting to be held after previous notice of three months.

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